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# THE PHOENIX

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Volume 1 No. 3

Autumn 1938

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Editor: James P. Cooney Woodstock New York

Published by the Maverick Press Woodstock New York

Fifty cents a copy. Year's subscription in America, two dollars;

Canada, two/fifty; foreign lands, three dollars

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# NEW MEXICO

*by*

*D. H. LAWRENCE*

Superficially, the world has become small and known. Poor little globe of earth, the tourists trot round you as easily as they trot round the Bois or round Central Park. There is no mystery left, we've been there, we've seen it, we know all about it. We've done the globe, and the globe is done.

This is quite true, superficially. On the superficies, horizontally, we've been everywhere and done everything, we know all about it. Yet the more we know, superficially, the less we penetrate, vertically. It's all very well skimming across the surface of the ocean, and saying you know all about the sea. There still remain the terrifying under-deeps, of which we have utterly no experience.

The same is true of land travel. We skim along, we get there, we see it all, we've done it all. And as a rule, we never once go through the curious film which railroads, ships, motor-cars, and hotels stretch over the surface of the whole earth. Peking is just the same as New York, with a few different things to look at; rather more Chinese about, etc. Poor creatures that we

are, we crave for experience, yet we are like flies that crawl on the pure and transparent mucous-paper in which the world like a bon-bon is wrapped so carefully that we can never get at it, though we see it there all the time as we move about it, apparently in contact, yet actually as far removed as if it were the moon.

As a matter of fact, our great-grandfathers, who never went anywhere, in actuality had more experience of the world than we have, who have seen everything. When they listened to a lecture with lantern-slides, they really held their breath before the unknown, as they sat in the village school-room. We, bowling along in a rickshaw in Ceylon, say to ourselves: "It's very much what you'd expect." We really know it all.

We are mistaken. The know-it-all state of mind is just the result of being outside the mucous-paper wrapping of civilization. Underneath is everything we don't know and are afraid of knowing.

I realized this with shattering force when I went to New Mexico.

New Mexico, one of the United States, part of the U.S.A. New Mexico, the picturesque reservation and playground of the eastern states, very romantic, old Spanish, Red Indian, desert mesas, pueblos, cowboys, penitentes, all that film-stuff. Very nice, the great South-West, put on a sombrero and knot a red kerchief round your neck, to go out in the great free spaces!

That is New Mexico wrapped in the absolutely hygienic and shiny mucous-paper of our trite civilization. That is the New Mexico known to most of the Amer-

icans who know it at all. But break through the shiny sterilized wrapping, and actually *touch* the country, and you will never be the same again.

I think New Mexico was the greatest experience from the outside world that I have ever had. It certainly changed me for ever. Curious as it may sound, it was New Mexico that liberated me from the present era of civilization, the great era of material and mechanical development. Months spent in holy Kandy, in Ceylon, the holy of holies of southern Buddhism, had not touched the great psyche of materialism and idealism which dominated me. And years, even in the exquisite beauty of Sicily, right among the old Greek paganism that still lives there, had not shattered the essential Christianity on which my character was established. Australia was a sort of dream or trance, like being under a spell, the self remaining unchanged, so long as the trance did not last too long. Tahiti, in a mere glimpse, repelled me: and so did California, after a stay of a few weeks. There seemed a strange brutality in the spirit of the western coast, and I felt: O, let me get away!

But the moment I saw the brilliant, proud morning shine high up over the deserts of Santa Fé, something stood still in my soul, and I started to attend. There was a certain magnificence in the high-up day, a certain eagle-like royalty, so different from the equally pure, equally pristine and lovely morning of Australia, which is so soft, so utterly pure in its softness, and betrayed by green parrot flying. But in the lovely morning



of Australia one went into a dream. In the magnificent fierce morning of New Mexico one sprang awake, a new part of the soul woke up suddenly, and the old world gave way to a new.

There are all kinds of beauty in the world, thank God, though ugliness is homogeneous. How lovely is Sicily, with Calabria across the sea like an opal, and Etna with her snow in a world above and beyond! How lovely is Tuscany, with little red tulips wild among the corn: or bluebells at dusk in England, or mimosa in clouds of pure yellow among the grey-green dun foliage of Australia, under a soft, blue, unbreathed sky! But for a *greatness* of beauty I have never experienced anything like New Mexico. All those mornings when I went with a hoe along the ditch to the Canon, at the ranch, and stood, in the fierce, proud silence of the Rockies, on their foot-hills, to look far over the desert to the blue mountains away in Arizona, blue as chalcidony, with the sage-brush desert sweeping grey-blue in between, dotted with tiny cube-crystals of houses, the vast amphitheatre of lofty, indomitable desert, sweeping round to the ponderous Sangre de Cristo, mountains on the east, and coming up flush at the pine-dotted foot-hills of the Rockies! What splendour! Only the tawny eagle could really sail out into the splendour of it all. Leo Stein once wrote to me: It is the most æsthetically-satisfying landscape I know. To me it was much more than that. It had a splendid silent terror, and a vast far-and-wide magnificence which made it way beyond mere æsthetic appreciation. Never

is the light more pure and overweening than there, arching with a royalty almost cruel over the hollow, uptilted world. For it is curious that the land which has produced modern political democracy at its highest pitch should give one the greatest sense of overweening, terrible proudness and mercilessness: but so beautiful, God! so beautiful! Those that have spent morning after morning alone there pitched among the pines above the great proud world of desert will know, almost unbearably how beautiful it is, how clear and unquestioned is the might of the day. Just day itself is tremendous there. It is so easy to understand that the Aztecs gave hearts of men to the sun. For the sun is not merely hot or scorching, not at all. It is of a brilliant and unchallengeable purity and haughty serenity which would make one sacrifice the heart to it. Ah, yes, in New Mexico the heart is sacrificed to the sun and the human being is left stark, heartless, but undauntedly religious.

And that was the second revelation out there. I had looked over all the world for something that would strike *me* as religious. The simple piety of some English people, the semi-pagan mystery of some Catholics in southern Italy, the intensity of some Bavarian peasants, the semi-ecstasy of Buddhists or Brahmins: all this had seemed religious all right, as far as the parties concerned were involved, but it didn't involve me. I looked on at their religiousness from the outside. For it is still harder to feel religion at will than to love at will.

I had seen what I felt was a hint of wild religion

in the so-called devil dances of a group of naked villagers from the far-remote jungle in Ceylon, dancing at midnight under the torches, glittering wet with sweat on their dark bodies as if they had been gilded, at the celebration of the Pera-hera, in Kandy, given to the Prince of Wales. And the utter dark absorption of these naked men, as they danced with their knees wide apart, suddenly affected me with a *sense* of religion. I *felt* religion for a moment. For religion is an experience, an uncontrollable sensual experience, even more so than love: I use sensual to mean an experience deep down in the senses, inexplicable and inscrutable.

But this experience was fleeting, gone in the curious turmoil of the Pera-hera, and I had no permanent feeling of religion till I came to New Mexico and penetrated into the old human race-experience there. It is curious that it should be in America, of all places, that a European should really experience religion, after touching the old Mediterranean and the East. It is curious that one should get a sense of living religion from the Red Indians, having failed to get it from Hindus or Sicilian Catholics or Cingalese.

Let me make a reservation. I don't stand up to praise the Red Indian as he reveals himself in contact with white civilization. From that angle, I am forced to admit he *may* be thoroughly objectionable. Even my small experience knows it. But also I know he *may* be thoroughly nice, even in his dealings with white men. It's a question of individuals, a good deal, on both sides.



But in this article, I don't want to deal with the everyday or superficial aspect of New Mexico, outside the mucous-paper wrapping, I *want* to go beneath the surface. But therefore the American Indian in his behavior as an American citizen doesn't really concern me. What concerns me is what he is --- or what he seems to me to be, in his ancient, ancient race-self and religious-self.

For the Red Indian seems to me much older than Greeks, or Hindus or any Europeans or even Egyptians. The Red Indian, as a civilized and truly religious man, civilized beyond taboo and totem, as he is in the south, is religious in perhaps the oldest sense, and deepest, of the word. That is to say, he is a remnant of the most deeply religious race still living. So it seems to me.

But again let me protect myself. The Indian who sells you baskets on Albuquerque station or who slinks around Taos plaza may be an utter waster and an indescribably low dog. Personally he may be even less religious than a New York sneak-thief. He may have broken with his tribe, or his tribe itself may have collapsed finally from its old religious integrity, and ceased, really to exist. Then he is only fit for rapid absorption into white civilization, which must make the best of him.

But while a tribe retains its religion and keeps up its religious practices, and while any member of the tribe shares in those practices, then there is a tribal integrity and a living tradition going back far beyond the birth of Christ, beyond the pyramids, beyond Moses.

A vast old religion which once swayed the earth lingers in unbroken practice there in New Mexico, older, perhaps, than anything in the world save Australian aboriginal taboo and totem, and that is not yet religion.

You can feel it, the atmosphere of it, around the pueblos. Not, of course, when the place is crowded with sight-seers and motor-cars. But go to Taos pueblo on some brilliant snowy morning and see the white figure on the roof: or come riding through at dusk on some windy evening, when the black skirts of the silent women blow around the white wide boots, and you will feel the old, old root of human consciousness still reaching down to depths we know nothing of: and of which, only too often, we are jealous. It seems it will not be long before the pueblos are uprooted.

But never shall I forget watching the dancers, the men with the fox-skin swaying down from their buttocks, file out at San Geronimo, and the women with seed rattles following. The long, streaming, glistening black hair of the men. Even in ancient Crete long hair was sacred in a man, as it is still in the Indians. Never shall I forget the utter absorption of the dance, so quiet, so steadily, timelessly rhythmic, and silent, with the ceaseless down-tread, always to the earth's centre, the very reverse of the upflow of Dionysiac or Christian ecstasy. Never shall I forget the deep singing of the men at the drum, swelling and sinking, the deepest sound I have heard in all my life, deeper than thunder, deeper than the sound of the Pacific Ocean, deeper than than the roar of a deep waterfall: the wonderful deep

sound of men calling to the unspeakable depths.

Never shall I forget coming into the little pueblo of San Filipi one sunny morning in spring, unexpectedly, when bloom was on the trees in the perfect little pueblo more old, more utterly peaceful and idyllic than anything in Theocritus, and seeing a little casual dance. Not impressive as a spectacle, only, to me, profoundly moving because of the truly terrifying religious absorption of it.

Never shall I forget the Christmas dances at Taos, twilight, snow, the darkness coming over the great wintry mountains and the lonely pueblo, then suddenly, again, like dark calling to dark, the deep Indian cluster-singing around the drum, wild and awful, suddenly rousing on the last dusk as the procession starts. And then the bon-fires leaping suddenly in pure spurts of high flame, columns of sudden flame forming an alley for the procession.

Never shall I forget the khiva of birch-trees, away in the Apaché country, in Arizona this time, the tepees and flickering fires, the neighing of horses unseen under the huge dark night, and the Apaches all abroad, in their silent moccasined feet: and in the khiva, beyond a little fire, the old man reciting, reciting in the unknown Apache speech, in the strange wild Indian voice that re-echoes away back to before the Flood, reciting apparently the traditions and legends of the tribe, going on and on, while the young men, the *braves* of today, wandered in, listened, and wandered away again, overcome with the power and majesty of that

utterly old tribal voice, yet uneasy with their half-adherence to the modern civilization, the two things in contact. And one of these *braves* shoved his face under my hat, in the night, and stared with his glittering eyes close to mine. He'd have killed me then and there, had he dared. He didn't dare: and I knew it: and he knew it.

Never shall I forget the Indian races, when the young men, even the boys, run naked, smeared with white earth and stuck with bits of eagle fluff for the swiftness of the heavens, and the old men brush them with eagle feathers, to give them power. And they run in the strange hurling fashion of the primitive world, hurled forward, not making speed deliberately. And the race is not for victory. It is not a contest. There is no competition. It is a great cumulative effort. The tribe this day is adding up its male energy and exerting it to the utmost --- for what? To get power, to get strength: to come, by sheer cumulative, hurling effort of the bodies of men, into contact with the great cosmic source of vitality which gives strength, power, energy to the men who can grasp it, energy for the zeal of attainment.

It was a vast old religion, greater than anything we know: more starkly and nakedly religious. There is no God, no conception of a god. All is god. But it is not the pantheism we are accustomed to, which expresses itself as "God is everywhere, God is in everything." In the oldest religion, everything was alive, not supernaturally but naturally alive. There were



only deeper and deeper streams of life, vibrations of life more and more vast. So rocks were alive, but a mountain had a deeper, vaster life than a rock, and it was much harder for a man to bring his spirit, or his energy, into contact with the life of the mountain, and so draw strength from the mountain, as from a great standing well of life, than it was to come into contact with the rock. And he had to put forth a great religious effort. For the whole life-effort of man was to get his life into direct contact with the elemental life of the cosmos, mountain-life, cloud-life, thunder-life, air-life, earth-life, sun-life. To come into immediate *felt* contact, and so derive energy, power, and a dark sort of joy. This effort into sheer naked contact, *without an intermediary or mediator*, is the root meaning of religion, and at the sacred races the runners hurled themselves in a terrible cumulative effort, through the air, to come at last into naked contact with the very life of the air, which is the life of the clouds, and so of the rain.

It was a vast and pure religion, without idols or images, even mental ones. It is the oldest religion, a cosmic religion the same for all peoples, not broken up into specific gods or saviours or systems. It is the religion which precedes the god-concept, and is therefore greater and deeper than any god-religion.

And it lingers still, for a little while, in New Mexico: but long enough to have been a revelation to me. And the Indian, however objectionable he may be on occasion, has still some of the strange beauty and pathos

of the religion that brought him forth and is now shedding him away into oblivion. When Trinidad, the Indian boy, and I planted corn at the ranch, my soul paused to see his brown hands softly moving the earth over the maize in pure ritual. He was back in his old religious self, and the ages stood still. Ten minutes later he was making a fool of himself with the horses. Horses were never part of the Indian's religious life, never would be. He hasn't a tithe of the feeling for them that he has for a bear, for example. So horses don't like Indians.

But there it is: the newest democracy ousting the oldest religion! And once the oldest religion is ousted, one feels the democracy and all its paraphernalia will collapse, and the oldest religion, which comes down to us from man's pre-war days, will start again. The skyscraper will scatter on the winds like thistledown, and the genuine America, the America of New Mexico, will start on its course again. This is an interregnum.



# MAX

*by*

HENRY MILLER

There are some people whom you call immediately by their first name. Max is one of them. There are people to whom you feel immediately attracted, not because you like them, but because you detest them. You detest them so heartily that your curiosity is aroused; you come back to them again and again to study them, to arouse in yourself a feeling of compassion which is really absent. You do things for them, not because you feel any sympathy for them, but because their suffering is incomprehensible to you.

I remember the evening Max stopped me on the boulevard. I remember the feeling of repugnance which his face, his whole manner inspired. I was hurrying along, on my way to the cinema, when this sad Jewish face suddenly blocks my way. He asked me for a light or something --- whatever it was it was only an excuse, I knew. I knew immediately that he was going to pour out a tale of woe, and I didn't want to hear it. I was curt and brusque, almost insulting; but that didn't matter, he stuck there, his face almost glued to mine, and clung like a leech. Without waiting to hear his

story I offered him some change, hoping that he would be disgusted and walk off. But no, he refused to be offended; he clung to me like a leech.

From that evening on it almost seems as if Max were dogging my steps. The first few times I ran into him I put it down to sheer coincidence. Gradually, however, I became suspicious. Stepping out of an evening I would ask myself instinctively --- "where now? are you sure Max won't be there?" If I were going for a stroll I would pick an absolutely strange neighborhood, one that Max would never dream of frequenting. I knew that he had to maintain a more or less fixed itinerary --- the grand boulevards, Montparnasse, Montmartre, wherever the tourists were apt to congregate. Towards the end of the evening Max would disappear from my mind completely. Strolling home, along an accustomed route, I would be entirely oblivious of Max. Then, sure as fate, probably within a stone's throw of my hotel, out he'd pop. It was weird. He'd always bob up head on, as it were, and how he got there suddenly like that I never could figure out. Always I'd see him coming towards me with the same expression, a mask which I felt he had clapped on expressly for me. The mask of sorrow, of woe, of misery, lit up by a little wax taper which he carried inside him, a sort of holy, unctuous light that he had stolen from the synagogue. I knew always what his first words would be and I would laugh as he uttered them, a laugh which he always interpreted as a sign of friendliness.

"How *are* you, Miller!" he would say, just as though



we hadn't seen each other for years. And with this *how are you* the smile which he had clapped on would broaden and then, quite suddenly, as though he had put a snuffer over the little wax taper inside him, it would go out. With this would come another familiar phrase --- "*Miller*, do you know what has happened to me since I saw you?" I knew very well that *nothing* had happened in the interim. But I knew also, from experience, that soon we would be sitting down somewhere to enjoy the experience of *pretending* that something had happened in the interim. Even though he had done nothing but walk his legs off, in the interim, that would be something new that had happened to him. If the weather had been warm, or if it had been cold, *that* would be something that had happened to him. Or if he had managed to get a day's work that too would be something. Everything that happened to him was of a bad nature. It couldn't be otherwise. He lived in the expectation that things would grow worse, and of course they always did.

I had grown so accustomed to Max, to his state of perpetual misfortune, that I began to accept him as a natural phenomenon: he was a part of the general landscape, like rocks, tree, urinals, brothels, meat markets, flower stalls, and so on. There are thousands of men like Max roaming the streets, but Max was the personification of all. He was Unemployment, he was Hunger, he was Misery, he was Woe, he was Despair, he was Defeat, he was Humiliation. The others I could get rid of by flipping them a coin. Not Max! Max was something so close to me that it was just impossible to

get rid of him. He was closer to me than a bedbug. Something *under* the skin, something in the bloodstream. When he talked I only half-listened. I had only to catch the opening phrase and I could continue by myself, indefinitely, *ad infinitum*. Everything he said was true, horribly true. Sometimes I felt that the only way to make known this truth would be to put Max flat on his back on the sidewalk and leave him there spouting out his horrible truths. And what would happen, should I do that? Nothing. *Nothing*. People have a way of making cute little detours, of stuffing their ears. People don't want to hear these truths. They *can't* hear them, for the reason that they're all talking to themselves in the same way. The only difference is that Max said them aloud, and saying them aloud he made them seem objective, as though he, Max, were only the instrument to reveal the naked truth. He had gotten so far beyond suffering that he had become suffering itself. It was terrifying to listen to him because he, Max, had disappeared, had been swallowed up by his suffering.

It's easier to take man as a symbol than as a fact. Max to me was a symbol of the world, of a condition of the world which is unalterable. Nothing will change it. Nothing! Silly to think of laying Max out on the sidewalk. It would be like saying to people --- "Don't you *see*? See what? *The world*? Sure they see. *The world*! That's what they're trying to escape, trying *not* to see. Every time Max approached me I had this feeling of having the whole world on my hands, of having it right under my nose. The best thing for you, Max, I often

thought to myself as I sat listening to him, is to blow your brains out. Destroy yourself! That's the only solution. But you can't get rid of the world so easily. Max is infinite. You would have to kill off every man, woman and child, every tree, rock, house, plant, beast, star. Max is in the blood. He's a disease.

I'm talking all the time about Max as about something in the past. I'm talking about the man I knew a year or so ago, before he went to Vienna --- the Max I ran out on, the Max I left flat. The last note I had from him was a desperate plea to bring "*medicaments*". He wrote that he was ill and that they were going to throw him out of the hotel. I remember reading his note and laughing over the broken English. I didn't doubt for a minute that everything he said was true. But I had made up my mind not to lift a finger. I was hoping to Christ he *would* croak and not bother me any more. When a week had passed, and no further word from him, I felt relieved. I hoped he had realized that it was useless to expect anything more of me. And supposing he had died? It made no difference to me either way --- I wanted to be left alone.

When it seemed as if I had really shaken him off for good and all I began to think of writing about him. There were moments when I was almost tempted to look him up, in order to corroborate certain impressions which I intended to exploit. I felt so strongly about it that I was on the point several times of paying him to come to see me. That last note of his, about the "*medicaments*", how I regretted having given it away! With

that note in my hands I felt I could bring Max to life again. It's strange now, when I think about it, because everything Max had ever said was so deeply engraved in my memory ... I suppose I wasn't ready to write the story then.

Not long after this I was obliged to leave Paris for a few months. I thought of Max only rarely, and then as though it were a humorous and pathetic incident in the past. I never asked myself --- "is he alive? what can he be doing now?" No, I thought of him as a symbol, as something imperishable --- not flesh and blood, not a man suffering. Then one night, shortly after my return to Paris, just when I am searching frantically for another man, whom do I run smack into but Max. And what a Max!

"*Miller, how are you? Where have you been?*"

It's the same Max only he's unshaved. A Max resurrected from the grave in a beautiful suit of English cut and a heavy velour hat with a brim so stiffly curved that he looks like a mannikin. He gives me the same smile, only its much fainter now and it takes longer to go out. It's like the light of a very distant star, a star which is giving its last twinkle before fading out forever. And the sprouting beard! It's that no doubt which makes the look of suffering stand out even more forcibly than before. The beard seems to have softened the look of absolute disgust which hung about his mouth like a rotten halo. The disgust has melted away into weariness, and the weariness into pure suffering. The strange thing is that he inspires even less pity in



me now than before. He is simply grotesque --- a sufferer and a caricature of suffering at the same time. He seems to be aware of this himself. He doesn't talk any more with the same verve; he seems to doubt his own words. He goes through with it only because it's become a routine. He seems to be waiting for me to laugh, as I used to. In fact, he laughs himself now, as though the Max he were talking about was another Max.

The suit, the beautiful English suit which was given him by an Englishman in Vienna and which is a mile too big for him! He feels ridiculous in it and humiliated. Nobody believes him any more --- *not in the beautiful English suit!* He looks down at his feet which are shod in a pair of low canvas shoes; they look dirty and worn, the canvas shoes. They don't go with the suit and the hat. He's on the point of telling me that they're comfortable nevertheless, but force of habit quickly prompts him to add that his other shoes are at the cobbler's and that he hasn't the money to get them out. It's the English suit, however, that's preying on his mind. It's become for him the visible symbol of his new misfortune. While holding his arm out so that I may examine the cloth he's already telling me what happened to him in the interim, how he managed to get to Vienna where he was going to start a new life and how he found it even worse there than in Paris. The soup kitchens were cleaner, that he had to admit. But grudgingly. What good is it if the soup kitchens are clean and you haven't even a sou in your pocket?

But it was beautiful, Vienna, and clean --- *so clean!* He can't get over it. But tough! Everybody is on the bum there. But it's so clean and beautiful, it would make you cry, he adds.

Is this going to be a long story, I'm wondering. My friends are waiting for me across the street, and besides, there's a man I must find...

"Yes, Vienna," I say absent-mindedly, trying to scan the terrace out of the corner of my eye.

"No, not Vienna. Basle!" he shouts. "*Basle!*"

"I left Vienna over a month ago," I hear him saying.

"Yes, yes, and what happened then?"

"*What happened?* I told you, Miller, they took my papers away from me. I *told* you, they made a tourist out of me!"

When I hear this I burst out laughing. Max laughs too in his sad way. "Can you imagine such a thing," he says. "I should be a *tourist!*" He gives another dingy chortle.

Of course that wasn't all. At Basle, it seems, they pulled him off the train. Wouldn't let him cross the frontier.

"I says to them --- what's the matter, please? Am I not *en regle?*"

All his life, I forgot to mention, Max has been fighting to be *en regle*. Anyway, they yank him off the train and they leave him there, in Basle, stranded. What to do? He walks down the main drive looking for a friendly face --- an American, or an Englishman at least. Suddenly he sees a sign. *Jewish Boarding House*. He walks

in with his little valise, orders a cup of coffee and pours out his tale of woe. They tell him not to worry --- it's nothing.

"Well, anyway, you're back again," I say, trying to break away.

"And what good does it do me?" says Max. "They made me a tourist now, so what should I do for work? *Tell me*, Miller! And with such a suit like this can I bum a nickel any more? I'm finished. If only I shouldn't look so well!"

I look him over from head to toe. It's true, he does look incongruously well off. Like a man just out of a sick bed --- glad to be up again, but not strong enough to shave. And then the hat! A ridiculously expensive hat that weighs a ton --- and silk-lined! It makes him look like a man from the old country. And the stub of a beard! If it were just a little longer he'd look like one of those sad, virtuous, abstract-looking wraiths who flit through the ghettoes of Prague and Budapest. Like a holy man. The brim of the hat curls up so stiffly, so *ethically*. Purim and the holy men a little tipsy from the good wine. Sad Jewish faces trimmed with soft beards. And a Joe Welch hat to top it off! The tapers burning, the rabbi chanting, the holy wail from the standees, and everywhere hats, hats, all turned up at the brim and making a jest of the sadness and woe.

"Well, anyway, you're back again," I repeat. I'm shaking hands with him but he doesn't drop my hand. He's in Basle again, at the Jewish Boarding House, and they're telling him how to slip across the border.

There were guards everywhere and he doesn't know how it happened but as they passed a certain tree and since no one came out it was safe and he went ahead. "And like that," he says, "I'm in Paris again. Such a lousy place as it is! In Vienna they were clean at least. There were professors and students on the bread line, but here they are nothing but bums, and such lousy bums, they give you bugs right away."

"Yes, yes, that's how it is, Max," and I'm shaking his hand again.

"You know, Miller, sometimes I think I am going mad. I don't sleep any more. At six o'clock I'm wide awake already and thinking on what to do. I can't stay in the room when it comes light. I must go down in the street. Even if I am hungry I must walk, I must see people. I can't stay alone any more. Miller, for God's sake, can you see what is happening to me? I wanted to send you a card from Vienna, just to show you that Max remembered you, but I couldn't think on your address. *And how was it*, Miller, in New York? Better than here, I suppose? No? The *crise*, too? Everywhere it's the *crise*. You can't escape. They won't give you to work and they won't give you to eat. What can you do with such bastards? Sometimes, Miller, I get so frightened ..."

"Listen, Max, I've got to go now. Don't worry, you won't kill yourself ... *not yet*."

He smiles. "Miller," he says, "you have such a good nature. You are so happy all the time. Miller, I wish I could be with you always. I would go anywhere in the world with you ... *anywhere*."



This conversation took place about three nights ago. Yesterday at noon I was sitting on the terrace of a little café in an out of the way spot. I chose the spot deliberately so as not to be disturbed during the reading of a manuscript. An *aperitif* was before me --- I had taken but a sip or two. Just as I am about half-way through the manuscript I hear a familiar voice. "Why *Miller*, how are you?" And there, as usual, bending over me is Max. The same peculiar smile, the same hat, the same beautiful suit and canvas shoes. Only now he's shaved.

I invite him to sit down. I order a sandwich and a glass of beer for him. As he sits down he shows me the pants to his beautiful suit --- he has a rope around his waist to hold them up. He looks at them disgustingly, then at the dirty canvas shoes. Meanwhile he's telling me what happened to him in the interim. All day yesterday, so he says, nothing to eat. Not a crumb. And then, as luck would have it, he bumped into some tourists and they asked him to have a drink. "I had to be polite," he says. "I couldn't tell them right away I was hungry. I kept waiting and waiting for them to eat, but they had already eaten, the bastards. The whole night long I am drinking with them and nothing in my belly. Can you imagine such a thing, that they shouldn't eat onct the whole night long?"

To-day I'm in the mood to humor Max. It's the manuscript I've been reading over. Everything was so well put ... I can hardly believe I wrote the damned thing.

"Listen, Max, I've got an old suit for you, if you want to trot home with me!"

Max's face lights up. He says immediately that he'll keep the beautiful English suit for Sundays. Have I an iron at home, he would like to know. Because he's going to press my suit for me ... *all my suits*. I explain to him that I haven't any iron, *but* I may have still another suit. ( It just occurred to me that somebody promised me a suit the other day. ) Max is in ecstasy. That makes *three* suits he'll have. He's pressing them up, in his mind. They must have a good crease in them, his suits. You can tell an American right away, he tells me, by the crease in his trousers. Or if not by the crease, by the walk. That's how he spotted me the first day, he adds. And the hands in the pockets! A Frenchman never keeps his hands in his pockets.

"So you're sure you'll have the other suit too?" he adds quickly.

"I'm fairly sure, Max ... Have another sandwich --- and another *demi*!"

"Miller," he says, "you always think of the right things. It isn't so much what you give me --- it's the way you think it out. You give me *courage*."

*Courage*. He pronounces it the French way. Every now and then a French word drops into his phrases. The French words are like the velour hat; they are incongruous. Especially the word *misere*. No Frenchman ever put such *misere* into *misere*. Well, anyway, *courage*! Again he's telling me that he'd go anywhere in the world with me. We'd come out allright, the two of us.

( And me wondering all the time how to get rid of him! ) But to-day its O.K. To-day I'm going to do things for you, Max! He doesn't know, the poor devil, that the suit I'm offering him is too big for me. He thinks I'm a generous guy and I'm going to let him think so. To-day I want him to worship me. It's the manuscript I was reading a few moments ago. It was so good, what I wrote, that I'm in love with myself.

"*Garcon!* A package of cigarettes --- *pour le monsieur!*"

That's for Max. Max is a *monsieur* for the moment. He's looking at me with that wan smile again. Well, *courage*, Max! To-day I'm going to lift you to heaven --- and then drop you like a sinker! Jesus, just one more day I'll waste on this bastard and then bango! I'll put the skids under him. To-day I'm going to listen to you, you bugger ... listen to every nuance. I'll extract the last drop of juice --- and then, *overboard you go!*

"Another *demi*, Max? Go on, have another ... just one more! And have another sandwich!"

"But *Miller*, can you *afford* all that?"

He knows damned well I can afford it, else I wouldn't urge him. But that's his line with me. He forgets I'm not one of the guys on the boulevards, one of his regular clientèle. Or maybe he puts me in the same category --- how should *I* know?

The tears are coming to his eyes. Whenever I see that I grow suspicious. Tears! Genuine little tears from the tear-jerker. Pearls, everyone of them. Jesus, if only I could get inside that mechanism for once and see how he does it!

It's a beautiful day. Marvellous wenches passing by. Does Max ever notice them, I wonder.

"I say, Max what do you do for a lay now and then?"

"For a *what?*" he says.

"You heard me. For a *lay!* Don't you know what a lay is?"

He smiles --- that wan, wistful smile again. He looks at me sidewise, as though a little surprised that I should put such a question to him. With *his* misery, *his* suffering, should he, Max, be guilty of such thoughts? Well, yes, to tell the truth, he does have such thoughts now and then. It's human, he says. But then, for ten francs, what can you expect? It makes him disgusted with himself. He would rather ...

"Yes, I know, Max. I know exactly what you mean ..."

I take Max along with me to the publisher's. I let him wait in the courtyard while I go inside. When I come out I have a load of books under my arm. Max makes a dive for the package --- it makes him feel good to carry the books, to do some real work.

"Miller, I think you will be a great success some day," he says. "You don't have to write such a wonderful book --- sometimes it's just luck."

"That's it Max, it's sheer luck. Just luck, that's all!"

We're walking along the Rue de Rivoli under the arcade. There's a bookshop somewhere along here where my book is on display. It's a little cubby-hole and the window is full of books wrapped in bright cellophane. I want Max to have a look at my book in the window.

I want to see the effect it will produce.

Ah, here's the place! We bend down to scan the titles. There's the *Kama Sutra* and *Under the Skirt*, *My Life and Loves*, and *Down There* ... But where's my book? It used to be on the top shelf, next to a queer book on flagellation.

Max is studying the jacket illustrations. He doesn't seem to care whether my book is there or not.

"Wait a minute, Max, I'm going inside."

I open the door impetuously. An attractive young Frenchwoman greets me. I give a quick, desperate glance at the shelves. "Have you got the *Tropic of Cancer*?" I ask. She nods her head immediately and points it out to me. I feel somewhat relieved. I inquire if it's selling well. And did she ever read it herself? Unfortunately she doesn't read English. I fiddle around hoping to hear a little more about my book. I asked her why it's wrapped in cellophane. She explains why. Still I haven't had enough. I tell her that the book doesn't belong in a shop like this --- it's not that kind of book, you know.

She looks at me rather queerly now. I think she's beginning to doubt if I really am the author of the book, as I said I was. It's difficult to make a point of contact with her. She doesn't seem to give a damn about my book or any book in the shop. It's the French in her, I suppose ... I ought to be getting along. I just realize that I haven't shaved, that my pants are not pressed and that they don't match my coat. Just then the door opens and a pale, aesthetic-looking young



Englishman enters. He seems completely bewildered. I sneak out while he's closing the door.

"Listen, Max, they're inside --- a whole row of them! They're selling like hot-cakes. Yes, everybody's asking for the book. That's what she says."

"I told you, Miller, that you would be a success."

He seems absolutely convinced, Max. Too easily convinced to suit me. I feel that I must talk about the book, even to Max. I suggest we have a coffee at the bar. Max is thinking about something. It disturbs me because I don't want him to be thinking about anything but the book for the moment. "I was thinking, Miller," he says abruptly, "that you should write a book about my experiences." He's off again, about his troubles. I shunt it off quickly.

"Look here, Max, I *could* write a book about you, but I don't want to. I want to write about myself. Do you understand?"

Max understands. He knows I have a lot to write about. He says I am a *student*. By that he means, no doubt, a *student of life*. Yes, that's it --- a student of life. I must walk around a great deal, go here and there, waste my time, appear to be enjoying myself, while all the time, of course, I am studying life, studying people. Max is beginning to get the idea. It's no cinch being a writer. A twenty-four hour job.

Max is reflecting on it. Making comparisons with his own life --- the difference between one kind of misery and another. Thinking of his troubles again, of how he can't sleep, thinking of the machinery inside his bean

that never stops.

Suddenly he says: "And the writer, I suppose he has his own nightmares!"

*His nightmares!* I write that down on an envelope immediately.

"You're writing that down?" says Max. "Why? Was it so good what I said?"

"It was *marvellous*, Max. It's worth money to me, a thought like that."

Max looks at me with a sheepish smile. He isn't sure whether I'm spoofing him or not.

"Yes, Max," I repeat, "it's worth a fortune, a remark like that."

His brain is beginning to labor. He always thought, he starts to explain, that a writer had first to accumulate a lot of facts.

"Not at all, Max! Not at all! The less facts you have the better. Best of all is not to have *any* facts, do you get me?"

Max doesn't get it entirely, but he's willing to be convinced. A sort of magic's buzzing in his brain. "That's what I was always thinking," he says slowly, as if to himself. "A book must come from the *heart*. It must *touch* you ..."

It's remarkable, I'm thinking, how quickly the mind leaps. Here, in less than a minute, Max has made an important distinction. Why, only the other day Boris and I we spent the whole day talking about this, talking about "the living word." It comes forth with the breath, just the simple act of opening the

mouth, *and being with God*, to be sure. Max understands it too, in his way. That the facts are nothing. Behind the facts there must be the man, *and the man must be with God*, must talk like God Almighty.

I'm wondering if it might not be a good idea to show Max my book, have him read a little of it in my presence. I'd like to see if he gets it. And *Boris!* Maybe it would be a good idea to present Max to Boris. I'd like to see what impression Max would make on him. There'd be a little change in it, too, no doubt. Maybe enough for the both of us --- for dinner ... I'm explaining to Max, as we draw near the house, that Boris is a good friend of mine, another writer like myself. "I don't say that he'll do anything for you, but I want you to meet him." Max is perfectly willing ... why not? And then Boris is a Jew, that ought to make it easier. I want to hear them talking Yiddish. I want to see Max weep in front of Boris. I want to see Boris weep too. Maybe Boris will put him up for a while, in the little alcove upstairs. It would be funny to see the two of them living together. Max could press his clothes and run errands for him --- and cook perhaps. There's lots of things he could do --- to earn his grub. I try hard not to look too enthusiastic. "A queer fellow, Boris," I explain to Max. Max doesn't seem to be at all worried about that. Anyway, there's no use going into deep explanations. Let them get together as best they can ...

Boris comes to the door in a beautiful smoking jacket. He looks very pale and frail and withdrawn, as though he had been in a deep reverie. As soon as I

mention "Max" his face lights up. He's heard about Max.

I have a feeling that he's grateful to me for having brought Max home. Certainly his manner is one of warmth, of sympathy. We go into the studio where Boris flops on the couch; he throws a steamer blanket over his frail body. There are two Jews now in a room, face to face, and both know what suffering is. No need to beat around the bush. Begin with the suffering ... plunge right in! Two kinds of suffering --- it's marvelous to me what a contrast they present. Boris lying back on the couch, the most elegant apostle of suffering that ever I've met. He lies there like a human Bible on every page of which is stamped the suffering, the woe, the torture, the anguish, the despair, the defeat of the human race. Max is sitting on the edge of his chair, his bald head dented just below the crown, as if suffering itself had come down on him like a sledgehammer. He's strong as a bull, Max. But he hasn't Boris' strength. He knows only *physical* suffering --- hunger, bedbugs, hard benches, unemployment, humiliations. Right now he's geared up to extract a few francs of Boris. He's sitting on the edge of his chair, a bit nervous because we haven't given him a chance yet to explain his case. He wants to tell the story from the beginning to end. He's fishing around for an opening. Boris meanwhile is reclining comfortably on his bed of sorrow. He wants Max to take his time. He knows that Max has come to suffer for him.

While Max talks I snoop about looking for a drink.

I'm determined to enjoy this seance. Usually Boris says immediately --- "what'll you have to drink?" But with Max on hand it doesn't occur to him to offer drinks.

Stone sober and hearing it for the hundredth time Max's story doesn't sound so hot to me. I'm afraid he's going to bore the pants off Boris --- with his "facts." Besides, Boris isn't keen on listening to long stories. All he asks for is a little phrase, sometimes just a word. I'm afraid Max is making it all too prosaic. He's in Vienna again, talking about the clean soup kitchens. I know it's going to take a little while before we get to Bâsle, then Bâsle to Paris, then Paris, then hunger, want, misery, then full dress rehearsal. I want him to plunge right into the whirlpool, into the stagnant flux, the hungry monotony, the bare, bedbuggy doldrums with all the hatches closed and no fire escapes, no friends, no *sortie*, no-tickee-no-shirtee business. No, Boris doesn't give a damn about continuity; he wants something dramatic, something vitally grotesque and horribly beautiful and true. Max is going to bore the pants off him, I can see that ...

It happens I'm wrong. Boris wants to hear the whole story, from beginning to end. I suppose it's his mood --- sometimes he shows an inexhaustible patience. What he's doing, no doubt, is to carry out his own interior monologue. Perhaps he's thinking out a problem while Max talks. It's a rest for him. I look at him closely. Is he listening? Seems to me he's listening all right. He smiles now and then.

Max is sweating like a bull. He's not sure whether he's making an impression or not.



Boris has a way of listening to Max as if he were at the opera. It's better than the opera, what with the couch and a steamer blanket. Max is taking off his coat; the perspiration is rolling down his face. I can see that he's putting his heart and soul into it. I sit at the side of the couch glancing from one to the other. The garden door is open and the sun seems to throw an aureole around Boris' head. To talk to Boris Max has to face the garden. The heat of the afternoon drifts in through the cool studio; it puts a warm, fuzzy aura about Max's words. Boris looks so comfortable that I can't resist the temptation to lie down beside him. I'm lying down now and enjoying the luxury of listening to a familiar tale of woe. Beside me is a shelf of books; I run my eye over them as Max spins it out. Lying down this way, hearing it at full length, I can judge the effect of it better. I catch nuances now that I never caught before. His words, the titles of the books, the warm air drifting in from the garden, the way he sits on the edge of his chair --- the whole thing combines to produce the most savory effect.

The room is in a state of complete disorder, as usual. The enormous table is piled with books and manuscripts, with pencilled notes, with letters that should have been answered a month ago. The room gives the impression somehow of a sudden state of arrest, as though the author who inhabited it had died suddenly and by special request nothing had been touched. If I were to tell Max that this man Boris lying on the couch had really died I wonder what he would say. That's exactly what Boris means too --- *that he died*. And that's

why he's able to listen the way he does, as though he were at the opera. Max will have to die too, die in every limb and branch of his body, if he's to survive at all ... The three books, one next to the other, on the top shelf --- almost as if they had been deliberately arranged that way: The Holy Bible, Boris' own book, the Correspondence between Nietzsche and Brandes. Only the other night he was reading to me from the Gospel according to Luke. He says we don't read the Gospels often enough. And then Nietzsche's last letter --- "*the crucified one.*" Buried in the tomb of flesh for ten solid years and the whole world singing his praise ...

Max is talking away. Max the presser. From somewhere near Lemberg he came --- near the big fortress. And thousands of them just like him, men with broad triangular faces and puffy underlip, with eyes like two burnt holes in a blanket, the nose too long, the nostrils broad, sensitive, melancholy. Thousands of sad Jewish faces from around Lemberg way, the head thrust deep into the socket of the shoulders, sorrow wedged deep between the strong shoulder blades. Boris is almost of another race, so frail, so light, so delicately attuned. He's showing Max how to write in the Hebrew character; his pen races over the paper. With Max the pen is like a broomstick; he seems to draw the characters instead of inscribing them. The way Boris writes is the way Boris does everything --- lightly, elegantly, correctly, definitively. He needs intricacies in order to move swiftly and subtly. Hunger, for instance, would be too coarse, too crude. Only stupid people worry about hunger. The

garden, I must say, is also remote to Boris. A Chinese screen would have served just as well --- better perhaps. Max, however, is keenly aware of the garden. If you gave Max a chair and told him to sit in the garden he would sit and wait for a week if necessary. Max would ask nothing better than food and a garden ...

"I don't see what can be done for a man like this," Boris is saying, almost to himself. "It's a hopeless case." And Max is shaking his head in agreement. Max is a case, and he realizes it. But *hopeless* --- that I can't swallow. No, nobody is hopeless --- not so long as there is a little sympathy and friendship left in the world. The *case* is hopeless, yes. But Max the man ... no, I can't see it! For Max the man there is still something to be done. There's the next meal, for example ... a clean shirt ... a suit of clothes ... a bath ... a shave. Let's not try to solve the *case*: let's do only what's necessary to do immediately. Boris is thinking along the same lines. Only differently. He's saying aloud, just as though Max were not there --- "of course, you could give him money ... but that won't help ..." *And why not?* I ask myself. Why not money? Why not food, clothing, shelter? *Why not?* Let's start at the bottom, from the ground up.

"Of course," Boris is saying, "if I had met him in Manila I could have done something for him. I could have given him work then ..."

Manila! Jesus, that sounds grotesque to me! What the hell has Manila got to do with it? It's like saying to a drowning man: "What a pity, what a pity! If you

had only let me teach you how to swim!"

Everybody wants to right the world; nobody wants to help his neighbor. They want to make a man of you without taking your body into consideration. It's all cockeyed. And Boris is cockeyed too, asking him *have you any relatives in America?* I know that tack. That's the social worker's first question. Your age, your name and address, your occupation, your religion, and then, very innocent like --- *the nearest living relative, please!* As though you hadn't been all over that ground yourself. As though you hadn't said to yourself a thousand times --- "I'll die first! I'll die rather than ..." And they sit there blandly and ask for the secret name, the secret place of shame, and they will go there immediately and ring the doorbell and they will blurt out everything --- while you sit at home trembling and sweating with humiliation.

Max is answering the question. Yes, he had a sister in New York. He doesn't know any more where she is. She moved to Coney Island, that's all he knows. Sure, he had no business to leave America. He was earning good money there. He was a presser and he belonged to the union. But when the slack season came and he sat in the park at Union Square he saw that he was nothing. They ride up on their proud horses and they shove you off the sidewalk. For what? For being out of work? Was it *his* fault ... did he, Max, do anything against the government? It made him furious and bitter; it made him disgusted with himself. What right had they to lay their hands on him? What right had they to make him feel like a worm?

"I wanted to make something of myself," he continues. "I wanted to do something else for a living --- not work with my hands all the time. I thought maybe I could learn the French and become an *interprete* perhaps."

Boris flashes me a look. I see that that struck home. The dream of the Jew --- *not to work with the hands!* The move to Coney Island --- another Jewish dream. From the Bronx to Coney Island! From one nightmare to another! Boris himself three times around the globe --- but it's always *from the Bronx to Coney Island*. Von Lemberg nach Amerika gehen! Yeah, go! On, weary feet! On! On! No rest for you anywhere. No comfort. No end to toil and misery. Cursed you are and cursed you will remain. *There is no hope!* Why don't you fling yourself into his arms? Why don't you? Do you think I will mind? Are you ashamed? Ashamed of what? We know that you are cursed and we can do nothing for you. We pity you, one and all. The wandering Jew! You are face to face with your brother and you withhold the embrace. That is what I can't forgive you for. Look at Max! He is almost your double! Three times around the globe and now you have met yourself face to face. How can you run away from him? Yesterday you were standing there like him, trembling, humiliated, a beaten dog. And now you stand there in a smoking jacket and your pockets are full to bursting. *But you are the same man!* You haven't altered an iota, except to fill your pockets. *Has he a relative in America?* Have you a relative in America? Your mother, where is she



now? Is she down there in the ghetto still? Is she still in that stinking little room you walked out of when you decided to make a man of yourself? At least you had the satisfaction of succeeding. You killed yourself in order to solve the problem. But if you hadn't succeeded? What then? What if you were standing there now in Max's shoes? Could we send you back to your mother? And what is Max saying? That if only he could find his sister he would throw his arms around her neck, he would work for her until his dying day, he would be her slave, her dog ... He would work for you too, if you would only give him bread and a place to rest. You have nothing for him to do --- I understand that. But can't you *create* something for him to do? Go to Manila, if needs be. Start the racket all over again. But don't ask Max to look for you in Manila three years ago. Max is here now, standing before you. *Don't you see him?*

I turn to Max. "Supposing, Max, you had your choice ... I mean suppose you could go wherever you like and start a new life ... where would you go?"

It's cruel to ask Max a question like that, but I can't stand this hopelessness. Look here, Max, I'm running on, I want you to look at the world as if it belonged to you. Take a look at the map and put your finger on the spot you'd like to be in. What's the use? *What's the use?* you say. Why just this, that if you want to badly enough you can go anywhere in the world. Just by wanting it. Out of desperation you can accomplish what the millionaire is powerless to accomplish. The boat is waiting for you; the country is waiting for

you; the job is waiting for you. All things await you if you can but believe it. I haven't a cent, but I can help you to go anywhere you wish. I can go around with the hat and beg for you. Why not? It's easier than if I were asking for myself. Where would you like to go --- *Jerusalem?* *Brazil?* Just say the word, Max, and I'll be off!

Max is electrified. He knows immediately where he'd like to go. And what's more, he almost sees himself going. There's just a little hitch --- *the money*. Even that isn't altogether impossible. How much does it take to get to the Argentine? A thousand francs? That's not impossible ... Max hesitates a moment. It's his age now that worries him. Has he the strength for it? The *moral* strength to begin afresh? He's forty-three now. He says it as if it were old age. (And Titian at 97 just beginning to get a grip on himself, on his art!) Sound and solid he is in the flesh, despite the dent in the back of his skull where the sledge-hammer came down on him. Bald yes, but muscles everywhere, the eyes still clear, the teeth ... Ah, the teeth! He opens his mouth to show me the rotting stumps. Only the other day he had to go to the dentist --- his *gencives* were terribly swollen. And do you know what the dentist said to him? Nervousness! Nothing but nervousness. That scared the life out of him. How should the dentist know that he, Max, was nervous?

Max is electrified. A little lump of courage is forming inside him. Teeth or no teeth, bald, nervous, cock-eyed, rheumatic, spavined, what not --- what matter?

A place to go to, that's the point. *Not Jerusalem!* The English won't let any more Jews in --- too many of them already. *Jerusalem for the Jews!* That was when they needed the Jews. Now you must have a good reason for going to Jerusalem --- a better reason than just being a Jew. Christ Almighty, what a mockery! If I were a Jew I would tie a rope around my neck and throw myself overboard. Max is standing before me in the flesh. Max the Jew. Can't get rid of him by tying a sinker around his neck and saying: "Jew, go drown yourself!"

I'm thinking desperately. Yes, if I were Max, if I were the beaten dog of a Jew that Max is ... What then? Yeah, *what?* I can't get anywhere imagining that I'm a Jew. I must imagine simply that I am a man, that I'm hungry, desperate, at the end of my tether.

"Listen, Boris, we've got to do something! *Do something, do you understand?*"

Boris is shrugging his shoulders. Where's all that money going to come from? He's asking *me!* Asking *me* where it's going to come from. All that money. *What money?* A thousand francs ... two thousand francs ... *is that money?* And what about that dizzy American Jane who was here a few weeks ago? Not a drop of love she gave you, not the least sign of encouragement. Insulted you right and left --- every day. And you handed it out to her. Handed it out like a Cræsus. To that little gold-digging bitch of an American. Things like that make me wild, furiously wild. Wouldn't have been so bad if she had been a plain whore. But she was worse than a whore. She bled you and insulted you. Called

you a dirty Jew. And you went right on handing it out. It could happen again to-morrow, the same damned thing. Anybody can get it out of you if only they tickle your vanity, if only they flatter the pants off you. You died, you say, and you've been holding one long funeral ever since. But you're not dead, and you know you're not. What the hell does spiritual death matter when Max is standing before you? Die, die, die a thousand deaths --- but don't refuse to recognize the living man. Don't make a problem of him. It's flesh and blood, Boris. *Flesh and blood*. He's screaming and you pretend not to hear. You are deliberately making yourself deaf, dumb, and blind. You are dead before the living flesh. Dead before your own flesh and blood. You will gain nothing, neither in the spirit nor in the flesh, if you do not recognize Max your true brother. Your books on the shelf there --- they stink, your books! What do I care for your sick Nietzsche, for your pale, loving Christ, for your bleeding Dostoevski! Books, books, books. Burn them! They are of no use to you. Better never to have read a line than to stand now in your two shoes and helplessly shrug your shoulders. Everything Christ said is a lie, everything Nietzsche said is a lie, if you don't recognize the word now *in the flesh*. They were foul and lying and diseased if you can derive a sweet comfort from them and not see this man rotting away before your very eyes. Go, go to your books and bury yourself there! Go back to your Middle Ages, to your Kabbala, to your hair-splitting, angel-twisting geometry. We need nothing of you. We need a breath of life. We need hope, courage, illusion. We need a penny's worth of human sympathy.

We're upstairs now in my place and the bath water is running. Max has stripped down to his dirty underwear; his shirt with the false front is lying over the arm-chair. Undressed he looks like a gnarled tree, a tree that has painfully learned to walk. The man of the sweat shop with his dickey slung over the arm-chair. The powerful body twisted by toil. From Lemberg to America, from the Bronx to Coney Island --- hordes and hordes of them, broken, twisted, spavined, as though they had been stuck on a spit and the struggle useless because struggle or no struggle they will sooner or later be eaten alive. I see all these Maxes at Coney Island on a Sunday afternoon: miles and miles of clear beach polluted with their broken bodies. They make a sewer of their own sweat and they bathe in it. They lie on the beach, one on top of the other, entangled like crabs and seaweed. Behind the beach they throw up their ready-made shacks, the combination bath, toilet and kitchen which serves as a home. At six o'clock the alarm goes off; at seven they're in the subway elbow to elbow, and the stench is powerful enough to knock a horse down.

While Max is taking his bath I lay out some clean things for him. I lay out the suit that was given to me, the suit which is too big for me and which he will thank me for profusely. I lie down to think things over calmly. The next move? We are all going to have dinner together over in the Jewish quarter, near St. Paul. Then suddenly Boris changed his mind. He remembered an engagement he had made for dinner. I wangled a little



change out of him for dinner. Then as we were parting, he handed Max a little dough. "Here, Max, I want you to take this," he said, fishing it out of his jeans. It made me wince to hear him say that --- and to hear Max thanking him profusely. I *know* Boris. I know this is his worst side. And I forgive him for it. I forgive easier than I can forgive myself. I don't want it to be thought that Boris is mean and hard-hearted. He looks after his relatives, he pays his debts, he cheats nobody. If he happens to bankrupt a man he does it according to the rules; he's no worse here than a Morgan or a Rockefeller. He plays the game, as they say. But *life*, life he doesn't see as a game. He wins out in every sphere only to discover in the end that he's cheated himself. With Max just now he won out handsomely. He got off by squeezing out a few francs for which he was handsomely thanked. Now that he's alone with himself he's probably cursing himself. To-night he'll spend twenty times what he gave Max, in order to wipe out his guilt.

Max has called me to the bathroom to ask if he can use my hairbrush. Sure, use it! (To-morrow I'll get a new one!) And then I look at the bath tub, the last bit of water gurgling through the drain. The sight of those filthy cruds floating at the bottom of the tub almost makes me puke. Max is bending over the tub to clean the mess. He's got the dirt off his hide at last; he feels good, even if he must mop up his own dirt. I know the feeling. I remember the public baths in Vienna, the stench that knocks you down ...

Max is stepping into his clean linen. He's smiling now --- a different sort of smile than I ever saw him give. He's standing in his clean underwear and browsing through my book. He's reading that passage about Boris, about Boris being lousy and me shaving his armpits, about the flag being at half-mast and everybody dead, including myself. That was something to go through --- and come out *singing*. Luck! Well, call it that if you like. Call it luck if it makes you feel any better. Only I happen to know differently. Happens it happened to me --- *and I know*. It isn't that I don't believe in luck. No, but it isn't what I mean. Say I was born innocent --- that comes nearer to hitting the mark. When I think back to what I was as a kid, a kid of five or six, I realize that I haven't altered a bit. I'm just as pure and innocent as ever. I remember my first impression of the world --- that it was good, *but terrifying*. It still looks that way to me --- good but terrifying. It was easy to frighten me, but I never spoiled inside. You can frighten me to-day, but you can't make me sour. It's settled. It's in the blood.

I'm sitting down now to write a letter for Max. I'm writing to a woman in New York, a woman connected with a Jewish newspaper. I'm asking her to try to locate Max's sister in Coney Island. The last address was 156th Street near Broadway. "*And the name, Max?*" She had two names, his sister. Sometimes called herself Mrs. Fischer, sometimes it was Mrs. Goldberg. "And you can't remember the house --- whether it was on a corner or in the middle of the block?" No, he can't.

He's lying now and I know it, but what the hell. Supposing there was no sister, what of it? There's something fishy about his story, but that's his affair, not mine.

It's even fishier, what he's doing now. He's pulling out a photograph taken when he was seven or eight --- a photograph of mother and son. The photograph almost knocks the pins from under me. His mother is a *beautiful* woman --- in the photograph. Max is standing stiffly by her side, a little frightened, the eyes wide open, his hair carefully parted, his little jacket buttoned up to the neck. They're standing somewhere near Lemberg, near the big fortress. The whole tragedy of the race is in the mother's face. A few years and Max too will have the same expression. Each new infant begins with a bright, innocent expression, the strong purity of the race moistening the large, dark eyes. They stand like that for several years and then suddenly, around puberty often, the expression changes. Suddenly they get up on their hind legs and they walk the treadmill. The hair falls out, the teeth rot, the spine twists. Corns, bunions, callouses. The hands always sweating, the lips twitching. The head down, almost in the plate, and the food sucked in with big, swishing gulps. To think that they all started clean, with fresh diapers every day ...

We're putting the photograph in the letter, as an identification. I'm asking Max to add a few words, in Yiddish, in that broomstick scrawl. He reads back to me what he has written and somehow I don't believe a

word of it. We make a bundle of the suit and the dirty linen. Max is worried about the bundle --- it's wrapped in newspaper and there's no string around it. He says he doesn't want to be seen going back to the hotel with that awkward looking bundle. He wants to look respectable. All the while he's fussing with the bundle he's thanking me profusely. He makes me feel as if I hadn't given him enough. Suddenly it occurs to me that there was a hat left here, a better one than the thing he's got on. I get it out and try it on. I show him how the hat should be worn. "You've got to turn the brim down and pull it well over your eye, see? And crush it in a bit --- like that!" Max says it looks fine on me. I go to the mirror and by Jove, it does become me. I'm sorry I'm giving it away. Now Max tries it on, and as he puts it on I notice that he doesn't seem enthusiastic about it. He seems to be debating whether it's worth the trouble to take along. That settles it for me. I take him to the bathroom and I set it rakishly over his right eye. I crush the crown in even more rakishly. I know that makes him feel like a pimp or a gambler. Now I try the other hat on him --- his own hat with the stiffly curled brim. I can see that he prefers that, silly as it looks. So I begin to praise the shit out of it. I tell him it becomes him more than the other. I talk him out of the other hat. And while he's admiring himself in the mirror I open the bundle and extract a shirt and a couple of handkerchiefs and stuff them back in the drawer. Then I take him to the grocer at the corner and I have the woman wrap the bundle properly. He

doesn't even thank the woman for her pains. He says she can afford to do me a service since I buy all my groceries from her.

We get off at the Place St. Michel. We walk towards his hotel in the Rue de la Harpe. It's the hour before dark when the walls glow with a soft, milky whiteness. I feel at peace with the world. It's the hour when Paris produces almost the effect of music upon one. Each step brings to the eye a new and surprising architectural order. The houses actually seem to arrange themselves in musical notation: they suggest quaint minuets, waltzes, mazurkas, nocturnes. We are going into the oldest of the old, towards St. Severin and the narrow, twisting streets familiar to Dante and da Vinci. I'm trying to tell Max what a wonderful neighborhood he inhabits, what venerable associations are here stored away. I'm telling him about his predecessors, Dante and da Vinci.

"And when was all this?" he asks.

"Oh, around the 14th century," I answer.

"That's it," says Max, "before that it was no good and after that it has been no good. It was good in the 14th century and that's all." If I like it so well he'd be glad to change places with me.

We climb the stairs to his little room on the top floor. The stairs are carpeted to the third floor and above that they are waxed and slippery. On each floor is an enamel sign warning the tenants that cooking and washing are not permitted in the rooms. On each floor is a sign pointing to the water closet. Climbing the

stairs you can look into the windows of the hotel adjoining; the walls are so close that if you stuck your mitt out the window you could shake hands with the tenants next door.

The room is small but clean. There's running water and a little commode in the corner. On the wall a few clothes hooks have been nailed up. Over the bed a yellow bulb. Thirty-seven francs a week. Not bad. He could have another for twenty-eight francs, but no running water. While he's complaining about the size of the room I step to the window and look out. There, almost touching me, is a young woman leaning out of the window. She's staring blankly at the wall opposite where the windows end. She seems to be in a trance. At her elbow are some tiny flower-pots; below the window, on an iron hook, hangs a dish-rag. She seems oblivious of the fact that I'm standing at her side watching her. Her room, probably no larger than the one we're standing in, seems nevertheless to have brought her peace. She's waiting for it to get dark in order to slip down to the street. She probably doesn't know anything about her distinguished predecessors either, but the past is in her blood and she connects more easily with the lugubrious present. With the darkness coming on and my blood astir I get an almost holy feeling about this room I'm standing in. Perhaps to-night when I leave him Max will spread my book on the pillow and pore over it with heavy eyes. On the flyleaf it is written: "To my friend Max, the only man in Paris who really knows what suffering is." I had the feeling, as I in-



scribed these words, that my book was embarking on a strange adventure. I was thinking not so much of Max as of others unknown to me who would read these lines and wonder. I saw the book lying by the Seine, the pages torn and thumb-marked, passages underlined here and there, figures in the margin, coffee stains, a man with a big overcoat shoving it into his pocket, a voyage, a strange land, a man under the Equator writing me a letter: I saw it lying under a glass and the auctioneer's hammer coming down with a bang. Centuries passing and the face of the world changing, changing. And then again two men standing in a little room just like this, perhaps this very room, and next door a young woman leaning out of the window, the flower-pots at her elbow, the dish-rag hanging from the iron hook. And just as now one of the men is worn to death; his little room is a prison and the night gives him no comfort, no hope of relief. Weary and disheartened he holds the book which the other has given him. But he can take no courage from the book. He will toss on his bed in anguish and the nights will roll over him like the plague. He will have to die first in order to see the dawn ... Standing in this room by the side of the man who is beyond all help my knowledge of the world and of men and women speaks cruelly and silently. Nothing but death will assuage this man's grief. There is nothing to do, as Boris says. It is all useless.

As we step into the hall again the lights go out. It seems to me as if Max were swallowed up in everlasting darkness.

It's not quite so dark outdoors though the lights are on everywhere. The Rue de la Harpe is thrumming. At the corner they are putting up an awning; there is a ladder standing in the middle of the street and a workman in big baggy trousers is sitting on top of it waiting for his side-kick to hand him a monkey-wrench or something. Across the street from the hotel is a little Greek restaurant with big terra cotta vases in the window. The whole street is theatrical. Everybody is poor and diseased and beneath our feet are catacombs choked with human bones. We take a turn around the block. Max is trying to pick out a suitable restaurant; he wants to eat in a *prix fixe* at 5.50 frs. When I make a face he points to a de luxe restaurant at 18 francs the meal. Clearly he's bewildered. He's lost all sense of values.

We go back to the Greek restaurant and study the menu pasted on the window. Max is afraid it's too high. I take a look inside and I see that it's crowded with whores and workmen. The men have their hats on, the floor is covered with sawdust, the lights are dingy. It's the sort of place where you might really have a good meal. I take Max by the arm and start dragging him in. A whore is just sailing out with a toothpick in her mouth. At the curb her companion is waiting for her; they walk down the street towards St. Severin, perhaps to drop in at the *bal musette* opposite the church. Dante must have dropped in there too once in a while --- for a drink, what I mean. The whole Middle Ages is hanging there outside the door of the restaurant; I've got one foot in and one foot out. Max

has already seated himself and is studying the menu. His bald head glistens under the yellow light. In the 14th century he would have been a mason or a joiner: I can see him standing on a scaffold with a trowel in his hand.

The place is filled with Greeks: the waiters are Greek, the proprietors are Greek, the food is Greek and the language is Greek. I want egg-plant wrapped in vine leaves, a nice patty of egg-plant swimming in lamb sauce, as only the Greeks know how to make it. Max doesn't care what he eats. He's afraid it's going to be too expensive for me. My idea is to duck Max as soon as the meal is over and take a stroll through the neighborhood. I'll tell him I have work to do --- that always impresses him.

It's in the midst of the meal that Max suddenly opens up. I don't know what's brought it on. But suddenly he's talking a blue streak. As near as I can recall now he was visiting a French lady when suddenly, for no reason at all, he burst out crying. Such crying! He couldn't stop. He put his head down on the table and wept and wept, just like a broken-hearted child. The French lady was so disturbed that she wanted to send for the doctor. He was ashamed of himself. Ah yes, he remembers now what brought it about. He was visiting her and he was very hungry. It was near dinner time and suddenly he couldn't hold back any longer --- he just up and asked her for a few francs. To his amazement she gave him the money immediately. A *French* lady. Then suddenly he felt miserable. To think

that a strong, healthy fellow like himself should be begging a poor French lady for a few sous. Where was his pride? What would become of him if he had to beg from a woman?

That was how it began. Thinking about it the tears came to his eyes. The next moment he was sobbing, then, just as with the French lady, he put his head on the table and he wept. It was horrible.

"You could stick a dagger into me," he said, when he had calmed himself, "you could do anything to me, but you could never make me cry. Now I cry for no reason at all --- it comes over me like that, all of a sudden, and I can't stop it."

He asks me if I think he's a neurasthenic. He was told it was just a *crise de nerfs*. *That's a breakdown, isn't it?* He remembers the dentist again, his saying right away it's nothing, just nervousness. How could the dentist tell that? He's afraid it's the beginning of something worse. Is he going mad perhaps? He wants to know the truth.

What the hell can I tell him? I tell him it's nothing --- just nerves.

"That doesn't mean you're going buggy," I add. "It'll pass as soon as you get on your feet ..."

"*But I shouldn't be alone so much, Miller!*"

Ah, that makes me wary. I know what's coming now. I ought to drop in on him oftener. Not money! No, he underlines that continually. But that he shouldn't be alone so much!

"Don't worry, Max. We're coming down often, Boris

and I. We're going to show you some good times."

He doesn't seem to be listening.

"Sometimes, Miller, when I go back to my room, the sweat begins to run down my face. I don't know what it is ... it's like I had a mask on."

"That's because you're worried, Max. It's nothing ... You drink a lot of water too, don't you?"

He nods his head instantly, and then looks at me rather terrified.

"How did you know that?" he asks. "How is it I'm so thirsty all the time? All day long I'm running to the hydrant. I don't know what's the matter with me ... Miller, I want to ask you something: is it true what they say, that if you're taken sick here they do you in? I was told that if you're a foreigner and you have no money they do away with you. I'm thinking about it all day long. What if I should be taken sick? I hope to God I shouldn't lose my mind. I'm afraid, Miller ... I've heard such terrible stories about the French. You know how they are ... you know they'll let you die before their eyes. They have no heart! It's always money, money, money. God help me, Miller, if I should ever fall so low as to beg them for mercy! Now at least I have my *carte d'identite*. A *tourist* they made me! Such bastards! How do they expect a man to live? Sometimes I sit and I look at the people passing by. Every one seems to have something to do, except me. I ask myself sometimes --- Max, what is wrong with you? Why should I be obliged to sit all day and do nothing? It's eating me up. In the busy season, when there's a little

work, I'm the first man they send for. They know that Max is a good presser. *The French!* what do they know about pressing? Max had to show them how to press. Two francs an hour they give me, because I have no right to work. That's how they take advantage of a white man in this lousy country. They make out of him a bum!"

He pauses a minute. "You were saying, Miller, about South America, that maybe I could start all over again and bring myself to my feet again. I'm not an old man yet --- only *morally* I'm defeated. Twenty years now I've been pressing. Soon I'll be too old ... my career is finished. Yes, if I could do some light work, something where I shouldn't have to use my hands ... That's why I wanted to become an *interprete*. After you hold an iron for twenty years your fingers aren't so nimble any more. I feel disgusted with myself when I think of it. All day standing over a hot iron ... the smell of it! Sometimes when I think on it I feel I must vomit. Is it right that a man should stand all day over a hot iron? Why then did God give us the grass and the trees? Hasn't Max a right to enjoy that too? Must we be slaves all our lives --- just to make money, money, money ...?"

On the *terrasse* of a café, after we've had our coffee, I manage to break away from him. Nothing is settled, except that I've promised to keep in touch with him. I walk along the Boulevard St. Michel past the Jardin du Luxembourg. I suppose he's sitting there where I left him. I told him to stay there awhile instead of



going back to the room. I know he won't sit there very long. Probably he's up already and doing the rounds. It's better that way too --- better to go round bumming a few sous than to sit doing nothing. It's summer now and there are some Americans in town. The trouble is they haven't much money to spend. It's not like '27 and '28 when they were lousy with dough. Now they expect to have a good time on fifty francs.

Up near the Observatoire it's quiet as the grave. Near a broken wall a lone whore is standing listlessly, too discouraged even to make a sign. At her feet is a mass of litter --- dead leaves, old newspapers, tin cans, brushwood, cigarette stubs. She looks as though she were ready to flop there, right in the dung heap, and call it a day.

Walking along the Rue St. Jacques the whole thing gets confused in my mind. The Rue St. Jacques is just one long picturesque shit-house. In every wormy little shack a radio. It's hallucinating to hear these crooning American voices coming out of the dark holes on either side of me. It's like a combination of five-and-ten-cent store and Middle Ages. A war veteran is wheeling himself along in a wheel chair, his crutches at his side. Behind him a big limousine waiting for a clearance in order to go full speed ahead. From the radios, all hitched up to the same station, comes that sickening American air --- "*I believe in miracles!*" Miracles! Miracles! Jesus, even Christ Almighty couldn't perform a miracle here! *Eat, drink, this is my body broken for thee!* In the windows of the religious shops are inexpensive crosses

to commemorate the event. A poor Jew nailed to a cross so that we may have life everlasting. And haven't we got it though ... cement and balloon tires and radios and loud-speakers and whores with wooden legs and commodities in such abundance that there's no work for the starving ... *I'm afraid that I should be alone too much!* On the sixth floor, when he enters his room, the sweat begins to roll down his face --- *as if he had a mask on!* Nothing could make me cry, not even if you stuck a dagger in me --- *but now I cry for nothing!* I cry and cry and I can't stop myself. *Do you think, Miller, I am going mad?* Is he going mad? Jesus, Max, all I can tell you is that the whole world, is going mad. You're mad, I'm mad, everybody's mad. The whole world's busting with pus and sorrow. Have you wound your watch up? Yes, I know you still carry one --- I saw it sticking out of your vest pocket. No matter how bad it gets you want to know what time it is. I'll tell you, Max, what time it is --- to the split second. *It's just five minutes before the end.* When it comes midnight on the dot that will be the end. Then you can go down into the street and throw your clothes away. Everybody will pop into the street new-born. That's why they were putting up the awning this evening. They were getting ready for the miracle. And the young woman leaning out of the window, you remember? She was dreaming of the dawn, of how lovely she would look when she would come down amidst the throng *and they would see her in the flesh.*

## MIDNIGHT

Nothing has happened.

8.00 A.M. It's raining. A day just like any other day.

Noon. The postman arrives with a penumatique. The scrawl looks familiar. I open it. It's from Max, as I thought ...

"To My Dear friends Miller and Boris --- I am writing to you these few lines having got up from bed and it is 3 o'clock in the morning I cannot sleep, am very nervis, I am crying and cant stop, I hear music playing in my ears, but in reality I hear screaming in the street, I suppose a pimp must have beaten up his hur --- it is a terrible noise, I cant stand it, the water tape is running in the sink, I cant do a wink of sleep I am reading your book Miller in order to quieten me, its amusing me but I have no patience I am waiting for the morning I'll get out in the street as soon as daylight breaks. A long night of suffering though I am not very hungary but I am afraid of something I don't know what is the matter with me --- I talk to myself I cant control myself. Miller, I don't want you to help me any more. I want to talk to you, am I a child? I have no courage, am I losing my reason? Dear Miller really don't think I need you for money, I want to talk to you and to Boris, no money, only moral help I need. I am afraid of my room I am afraid to sleep alone --- is it the end of my carrier? It seems to me. I have played the last cart. I cant breed. I want morning to come to get out in the street. I am praying to God to help me to pass

quigly this terrible night, yes it is a night of agony. I cant stand the heat, and the atmosphere of my room. I am not drunk believe me while I'm writing this --- only I pass the time away and it seems to me that I'm speaking to you and so I'm finding a little comfort but I'm afraid to be alone --- what is it, it is just raining outside and I'm looking out of the window, that does me good, the rain is talking to me but morning won't come --- it seems to me that night will never end. I am afraid the french will do me away in case of sickness because being a forinner is that so? Miller, tell me is it true --- I was told that if a forinner is sick and has nobody they do him away quigly instead of curing him even when there is a chance. I am afraid the french shouldn't take me away, then I shall never see daylight. Oh no, I shall be brave and control myself but I don't want to go out in the street now, the Police might take a false statement, else I should go now out of my Room out in the street, for I can't stay in my Room, but I'm much afraid every night, I'm afraid. Dear Miller, is it possible to see you? I want to talk to you a little. I don't want no money, I'm going crazy. Sincerely yours, Max.'



## BEYOND THE BREAD PRINCIPLE

by

MICHAEL FRÆNKEL

*Poet vs. Thinker* ... I remember your saying something once about the poet in relation to the thinker or philosopher which is very much to the point here. You said that the philosopher is one who thinks first and writes after; the poet writes first and thinks after. The difference is crucial and throws a sharp light on the point I wish to make, namely, that ideas as such will never mean more to you than what they have always meant --- things to play with, to pass the time with. They will never become fixed articles of faith. And this, I venture to say, because you are a poet, and ideas are not your stock and trade. You travel light. As a fact, you know very well that the lighter you travel, the better will be the poem. You write first, and think afterward, when you have nothing else or better to do, when, for the moment, there is no poem to write. The philosopher or thinker, on the other hand, thinks first and writes later; he has to have his mental pouch full before he comes into the market place; if there's nothing there, he'll have nothing to sell. The philosopher, like the ancient pirate, or sea-faring man, carries his scoop of

gold tucked away somewhere on his person, and the larger the scoop the richer he is. But the poet needs no such hoard. He belongs to the most ancient order of wandering men whose motto is: *Qui vere monachus est nihil reputat esse nisi catharum*. --- The wandering minstrel calls nothing his own but his guitar. --- The poet has himself: his immediate intuitions, insights, passions, hates and what not. He has his guitar. That's his fortune. He can get song out of it anytime he is moved to, and it'll be good or bad depending on what sort of instrument he is, and how well he can handle himself. The poet writes first: he just simply has to finger the strings, and there's his meaning to himself and to the world. The philosopher thinks first: if he has nothing in his mental pouch or if what he has is not quite the thing, if it's not the real metal, it'll be worth just that much to himself and to the world. All the risk he ran, the effort he expended, the ceaseless watching he did, will avail him little: what he has is worthless.

Thus from Homer down, we have observed a very interesting fact about poets. *Poets stutter*. To lisp in numbers ... The poem itself is in the nature of one long stutter. Now the stutter, as it seems to me, is only a mental equivalent of something much grosser --- the good old honorable fainting spell or fit to which our St. Pauls, Swedenborgs, Blakes, etc., were no strangers. My point is that epileptic types have never been known to consort very long with ideas. Or putting it in the language of the schools, epileptics are not of the ideological type. What body of ideas would you say Dos-



toevsky, for example, stood for? What philosophical system? What *Weltanschauung*? None that I know of. He was a seer, a mystic, a poet, but certainly not a Kant, not even an inspired Nietzsche. I wouldn't trust a man like Dostoevsky to carry an idea from Chicago to Cicero. Sure as you live, he'll drop it somewhere along the way. Something happens to him along the way, some voice or other comes to him, and smash goes the idea. But no matter, when he comes to himself, he finds he's got something else. He picked up another idea ... You remember Myshkin in *The Idiot*. You remember how he always forgot to bring whatever it was he was supposed to bring to someone or other. Well, but he always did bring something. Myshkin was a poet, and everything is grist for the mill to the poet, and that is as it should be, for everything, as Emerson would say, is in God, the supreme poet.

I understand you were out one day, and seeing what man has done to man, a wave of proper indignation and revulsion swept over you, and you dropped a fit. You dropped what you had --- whatever it was that you believed in before --- and picked up the Proletarian Revolution. Good. Go to the market place and sing your song of sixpence, like the true poet you are. Sing the song of the Revolution, and have it over with.

On the other hand, if in dropping your old ideas, you have also dropped yourself, the poet, and are now running into the market place as the thinker you are not, thinking that what you have picked up is the very philosopher's stone itself, then I have something to tell you, and do you listen ...

*Beyond the Bread Principle* ... Each of us has to reach down to his integrity, whatever it is, and act from that. Integrity is not something we acquire; what is acquired is the habit of reaching down to it. And when a man acts from his integrity today, he is a revolutionist. A revolutionist. Not the proletarian revolutionist. Not the bourgeois revolutionist. The one wants to save the proletariat; the other the bourgeoisie. The Revolutionist wants to save Man, integral creative man.

The old order is exhausted, you say. Politics, economics, law, religion, the entire existing state of affairs must be killed in the body, as it has already been killed in the poem. But I understand you just want to kill the bourgeoisie. And the bourgeois revolutionist wants to kill the proletariat. I want to kill bourgeoisie and proletariat alike. Why not? If it's to be a clean slate, if we have to make a fresh start, I say go the whole hog. Nothing less will do. Let the lands run with blood. Let the earth be washed clean. Washed clean in a holocaust of blood. You are afraid that in this frenzy of universal destruction not a soul will stay? There'll be a motherless world? God will see to that, I am sure, as He has always done before. Some one *will* stay, and it'll be enough for a fresh start. After the deluge Noah, and after Noah the generations of Noah. *Après le deluge la jeune foi.*

And I believe that that's precisely where we are heading for. And that's why I am so easy inside. That's why I don't fret and don't fuss. I know it'll all come out in the end. The moving finger writes, and having

writ, not one syllable of Mussolini, Stalin or Hitler will stay. For they are only the preparation, the gentlest suggestion of what's still to come. But they will pass. There will be the greater wars and the greater alarms of wars. The greater bloodshed and the greater destruction. Man will reach down to the most elementary level of beast and jungle. An extreme way, no doubt, but maybe the only way out. Man will reach a point where there will be nothing else for him to do but to cease being man. Perhaps it's the only way to begin being man again.

Everything happening now or in the near future is only preparation, setting the stage for this first and last Man. The first and last man who will have known and lived out every first and last emotion, every first and last hope, every first and last ideal. His will be the new faith, for every other faith will have been washed away in human blood and human sacrifice --- the faith in bread as well! Bread! What will bread mean to this first and last man who had known human blood? The principle of bread will finally spend itself with this man, at this point.

For it is only as man has been driven back beyond bread, by force of the more stark and naked reality of blood, that the first step has been taken toward a new social order. And that first step taken naturally leads to the next step where the human balance is established again, where bread finds its proper place in the social order, instead of the social order finding its place in bread.

There is a Sacred Process which rises and falls with human society, as faith and the tangible manifestation of faith. As it dies, human society dies; as it is born again, human society is born again. It is the process by which bread is transmuted into the holy body of faith, and the holy body of faith retransmuted into bread. Take, eat, this is my body ...

I remember when I was nine years old going home through Mulberry Street in New York when a bunch of boys got hold of me and knocked me down and beat me and took away my supply of candies --- I was peddling candies then --- and every penny I had. It was all the money I made that day from the sale of my candies, and I could not go home. I would have to explain to my mother and I was ashamed. So I made my way to the public library on Rivington and Allen Streets instead. It was summer, and the reading room was on the roof then, and I knew it would be nice and pleasant in the reading room. And when I reached the landing that opened on the roof, the woman librarian sighted me and smiled. That meant I could come in, for the reading room was open only to grown-ups, and I was just a kid. I stepped over to one of the shelves and picked out the book of the English poets and sat down with it to one of the tables, and came on a poem called *Ode to a Nightingale* by John Keats. It sounded so sad and true and beautiful, though I hardly understood all the words, tears came to my eyes and I wept. Over and over again I read the poem until it was time to go, it was ten o'clock. When I left, I was strong inside.

So what? you ask. You were beaten and robbed and turned to the nightingale, and the nightingale healed you? Yes, it was the nightingale --- art, idea, faith, call it what you will --- that healed that child's spirit, made it whole again.

*The trouble with all current revolutionary action, whether proletarian or bourgeois, is that it takes off precisely where it should leave off --- from the principle of bread. It starts off with ideal man at the feed-trough and winds up with man the beast at an empty ideal.*

It works, in other words, from the same motivating principle that has culminated in the kind of society we have today, one that has lost all inward meaning and substance and become simply an instrument for production and work --- animal survival.

I am for revolution, on all fronts, for the Communist Revolution as well, but I won't go further with the Communists than that. I am with them while they are still on the revolution --- the destructive --- side of their program, I stop as soon as they begin setting up their "new" order. For having presumably gotten the old one out of the way, they go ahead and build a new one on the very principle on which the old order cracked up: bread, the economic principle.

I affirm Marxism as it negates the present order. I negate it as the possible basis for a new.

I maintain that any social analysis that takes off from the principle of bread as prime mover applies to a society in decay, and any change it projects in terms of that analysis must necessarily spell not advance, but retrogression.

*Historical Materialism: Deterioration of Body ...* Marx disarms no one but his critics. For he gets them down to his own level, and forces them to meet him with his own weapons. And whereas these weapons are of a deadly effectiveness in his hands, they are just no good at all in the hands of his critics. But supposing you don't argue with Marx, supposing you just hold your tongue, and accept what he says as true. Then Marx indicts himself, and his dialectic is revealed for what it really is --- *a statement of decay and death*. A statement, that is, of the economic or functional motivation in society as opposed to the ideational or spiritual.

This, to be sure, is so not because of any internal contradiction in the Marxian dialectic, but as one juxtaposes to the Marxian order of society another order that does not fall under Marxian laws; and predicates, moreover, a society to be in form or on the decline as it represents one or the other, that is, as it is an expression predominately of economics --- the functional principle --- or of idea, being --- the creative and spiritual.

To repeat: A society is alive as it acts as a state of being, *body*: as its *raison d'être* is itself, the expression and fulfillment of its own inherent life-form. As it loses this inherency and becomes a means toward end, instead of end *per se*, that is, as it becomes a functional instrument and organizes itself on the basis of production and work as prime reality --- *as it lives to work*, to realize an end outside itself --- according to a Marxian dynamic, it declines and dies.



Marx's penetrating analysis is concerned entirely with a functional society. Everything that he says about *it* is true. There is the other order of society, the creative and spiritual, about *that* he says nothing.

Thus, we must be extremely careful in talking about Marx. What is it we object to? Marxism, the basic principles according to which the functional society which he analyses, operates, *or* the functional society thus analysed? There is a world of difference between the two. There would be far less confusion among Marxists and non-Marxists alike if they thoroughly recognized the fundamental distinction here. One may be violently opposed to the order of society Marx analyses, but one cannot help but accept the basic truth contained in his analysis. No person who analyses society as function can possibly evade his conclusions. Indeed, so consummately, and with such penetrating insight and understanding did Marx take the cast of functional society, one is almost tempted to ask, paraphrasing Nietzsche, "Which is it, did functional society create Marx, or Marx functional society?"

Thus, for Marxists who have no vision of a society other than a functional one, Marx's famous book is the book of the light and the life. To me it is the book of the dead. Thus also, from their standpoint, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the reorganization of society on a forthright basis of production and distribution, marks the highest advance thus far in the evolution of human society. To me it represents the final phase of dissolution and death.

What time is it? Marxists look at their universal time-piece and say it's the hour of the revolution, the beginning of the new day. It hardly occurs to them that it may be the last hour of a smaller, more modest time-piece about to run out.

Marx steps on the scene at the beginning more or less of the 19th Century. He is confronted with a society in which the basic motivation has already definitely shifted from being to function: society had already acquired a strictly economic content. It had entered definitely on its decline. For the first time in the history of the West it was possible to see clearly the congealing process that began with the Reformation and the rise of science. Work had already definitely come to stand as the ultimate goal of human society and human life. Society had become an instrument simply for production and work. Marx looks at it, and of course it lacks all inner motivation, spiritual content. Does idea (spirit) make bread --- the political-economic social reality; or does bread make idea? he asks himself. Of course, idea is not making bread, he says, for where is the idea? He sees only the bread. From this to the next step is easy --- for Marx. Always and everywhere, he concludes, it's bread that makes idea.

Marx has thus definitely and irrevocably committed himself to an analysis of a functional society, one in the process of decline. He stood Hegel on his head, he said, but Hegel was really Marx upside down.

But if historical materialism thus definitely overreached itself with Marx, in the sense that it attempted

to embrace *all* of history, to apply to periods that had not yet lost their ideational or spiritual content and hardened into strictly functional or economic moulds, there is absolutely no doubt that it made no error with respect to the society directly and immediately involved. In Marx's time, and more so now, it is a perfect picture of a strictly economic congeries of forces and tensions.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, for Marx there is only one reality, the outer; everything else is but a reflection of it in the mind. "For Hegel," he tells us, "the process of thinking which under the name of Idea he even transforms into an independent system, is the demiurgus of the real world, while the real world is only its external expression. With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thought."<sup>2</sup>

With Marx, philosophy --- not abstract mathema-

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<sup>1</sup>. Thus, as present-day society continues to develop more and more after the Marxian analysis, and Marxist thought sweeps down from the highest intelligence to the lowest, from a Lenin to a longshoreman or miner, it becomes increasingly difficult to communicate to people a world view that is not in terms of Marxian dialectics. No matter how simple it may be in its a-Marxian standpoint, it will sound like gibberish to the Marxian of a degree. --- But if I realize that, times being what they are, there are few ears for what I have to say, I also realize that were times different, there would be no need for what I have to say.

<sup>2</sup>. Marx: *Capital*, 1.25.

tical philosophy which is still functioning as an independent water-tight system absolutely divorced from life--- finally comes to a close. Like the society into whose service it was inducted, it became a functional instrument, a means of uncovering the dynamic forces of a society at work, in a word, it became useful. Philosophy in the past, as it concerned itself with life in society as idea, being, *body*, only remained philosophy, speculative and abstract --- "useless," according to the famous Aristotlean notion.<sup>3</sup> With Marx, society functions as economics, and philosophy goes to work. Socrates, it is said, took down philosophy from heaven to earth. Marx sends her to the factory.

"The Marxian dialectic," we are told, is a sort of X-ray apparatus, enabling us to see the very bones of society; and to see how they move."<sup>4</sup> And Marx gives it his final blessing thus: "Philosophy cannot realize itself without abolishing the proletariat; the proletariat cannot abolish itself without realizing philosophy."<sup>5</sup>

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3. "Philosophy needs neither protection, attention nor sympathy from the masses. It maintains its character of complete unutility, and thereby frees itself from all subservience to the average man ... If it does really turn out to the advantage of anyone, it rejoices from simple human sympathy; but does not live on the profit it bring to others, neither anticipating it nor hoping for it."

Ortega y Gasset: *Revolt of the Masses*.

4. John Strachey: *The Coming Struggle for World Power*.

5. Marx: *Zur Kritik der hegeleschen Rechts-philosophie*.

The traditional philosopher looked upon ideas as prime movers of human events and human deeds; in this sense he was an idealist. With Lord Acton, he could declare proudly: "It is our (the historian's) function to keep in view and command the movement of ideas which are not the effect but the cause of public events." For Marx events are movers of ideas. He is a realist who sees facts. Communism is a fact. "Communism," he writes, "is not an ideal conception which ought to be established, not an ideal toward which society has to direct itself. When we speak of Communism we mean the actual movement which makes an end of the present condition of affairs."<sup>6</sup> As the struggle for power continues to center and intensify around the means of production and distribution, and as the latter becomes increasingly complex at each stage in this struggle and with each advance in technical skill and knowledge, the internal contradictions that develop from the private control of the means of production and distribution become insupportable. Then the proletariat has to scotch the machine, or else take over the means of production and distribution. It's as simple as that.

But the Communist Manifesto reads: "The earth rightfully belongs to him who tills it." Rightfully! And the Socialist enthusiast declaims that the classless Socialist society is a higher and nobler form of social organization. These are sentiments that sound very

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6. Marx: *Die deutsche Ideologie*.

much like moral judgments, don't they? And moral judgments are expressions of ideas as such. It looks very much as if we are being enmeshed in the toils of idealism once more. We seemed to have moved away considerably from that forthright realism which would find in the inevitable movement of events, *per se*, their final meaning and justification.

But no --- and this is where the Marxists haul in their Trojan Horse: History. These sentiments can only be construed historically, that is, from the standpoint of historical necessity or inevitability. History only enacts the logical, inevitable development of human Society --- society, of course, with a grand letter. And what History ordains is right, and what History realizes is the last, the highest good. The burden of the whole argument finally falls on History; History settles the issue.

Society, men, events are all inducted into the service of History. To realize History. Man becomes a means in the attainment of the greatest end of all --- History. Except as man helps to realize History, he remains eternally damned, an outcast of History. Up and doing in the name of the Revolution! In the name of History! It's the last word in the Utilitarian Gospel; a new version of the old notion of original sin. The shades of Zinzendorf! "Man lives that he may work, and if man has no work, he either suffers or dies."

And before such an end as History, everybody is of course equal. To each his task in the realization of the Ultimate Good --- History; and no task is greater or



smaller than another, for all tasks are in the Common Good.

The Marxian dialectic marks the turn from society as a self-contained, self-fulfilling spiritual organism to society as an economic instrument in the attainment of an end --- History. As such it marks the turn from livingness to death.

But what is history? From the Marxian standpoint, it would seem to be something very mysterious, some great, all-mighty Power standing outside man, and directing and shaping his destiny. But history is no more than the reflection, in the physical and tangible world, of man himself: of all that he has thought, felt and done.

Man's destiny is from within, it shapes and determines history. History does not make man, man makes history. There is history as there is vital, living man, creative man. Take him away, put in his place one that has gone dead inside, and there's no more history, just flux, in the largest general sense biology; in the more specific sense of what still remains as historical reality, the historical residuum, as it were, those forces and tensions originally initiated by man and still waiting to be resolved. In this sense, as Emerson said: "All history becomes subjective; in other words, there is properly no history; only biography."

But having thrown the enormous burden Marxist thought has on the primacy of events in relation to ideas, it is but natural for it to erect finally a conception of the role of these events which makes them quite in-

dependent of man himself and sets them up in their sum-total effect as the Great and Infallible Mover, Absolute Overlord and Ruler of human destiny.

*The Democratic Principle: The Origin of a Contradiction* ... A society that is in form, vital and alive, an end in itself, acting from the spiritual and creative motivation, is aristocratic. It recognizes distinctions between men and men, class and class, ruling and ruled. It is founded in the recognition of power, individual and collective, in the affairs of men and government. Power, the fullest spontaneous expression of the individual and collective self-form, is norm: collective society organizes itself in fullest recognition of that norm. Power, individual and collective, emanates and flows from top to bottom, from greater individual to smaller, in a self-generating stream which touches on the lives of every member of the group, and relates and binds groups and individuals in one essential inner and outer unity. Every individual, however great or humble, is, within his immediate sphere of influence, a higher or lower focal point of power, standing in a recognized relation of power to another focal point above or below him. Individual authority within the sphere in which it functions is supreme: it is an expression of the immediate individual at the center, of his individual will which is indivisible and organic *and cannot be shared*. Thus, the authority of the humblest head of a household is as unquestioned as the authority of the king; and by the same token, the one is as much

an aristocrat as the other. This is the true aristocratic principle which governs social organization as an *organic* whole. Society loses this intrinsic organic unity and becomes so many disparate anarchic fragments in a *collective* whole merely, when the power urge is negated and denied, and in place of the fulfillment of its own inalienable essential life-form, there is substituted some end or goal to be fulfilled on its own account. The aristocratic principle has given way to the democratic. Men now begin to talk of equality in the affairs of government, and of *sharing* social and political authority, because they no longer relate back to themselves, each to his own inalienable individual life-form, in a larger social pattern which itself is a reflection of the larger social life-form, but to some thing outside of themselves --- an ideal or end --- which stands in a fixed qualitative relation to all.

When I speak of the democratic principle, I do not have in mind a form of government, but rather a theory of government. The democratic principle takes its stance in the famous proposition laid down by our own founding fathers, that men were created free and equal. It's a notion that grew up with the 18th Century, with rationalism and the rise and growth of science (technicism), and its godfather, as I understand, is Rousseau. From a proposition originally in law, it was transformed in the course of time into a proposition of nature. Reason and the machine had already paved the way. On the basis of reason men could meet as equals --- nothing so smooths and irons out differences between

men as reason. And as for the machine, what gives the individual citizen of a modern industrial community a deeper sense of the basic equality of all men than the product of the machine? Whatever difference used to exist between one man and another in the days of hand labor, as there was a difference between one man's product and another's, this difference has disappeared with the standardized machine product. Before the product of the machine every man feels he is as good as the next fellow. From this basic sense of the essential equality of all men there has issued the profoundest change in the status of the mass man in society. The change has amounted to something like a revolution. Perhaps it is *the* revolution Socialists are so much talking about. The mass man has emerged from the obscurity in which he was lost for centuries, and come into the full light of the ruling day. He, too, is now out to carve himself a place in the sun. He, too, will be heard in the councils of the great and powerful. And --- this is the point --- the great and powerful have recognized his claim: they will hear him; they *do* hear him. They will and do hear him, if they do nothing more. And on the basis of this recognition of the mass man in the affairs of government, there has grown up a very profound and almost obsessive and sinister concern on the part of the ruling class, for the opinions and prejudices of the rank and file. The heads of states, whether they will admit it to themselves or not, think and act as if the final source of authority were not in the ruler, but in the people. Not my will be done, but the people's!

I do not mean to imply by this that the people necessarily rule. Far from it! A new art of enlightened demagoguery twists and exploits the will of the people to its own ends: "sells" and maneuvers the people into believing and doing what it wants them to believe and do. But the fact that the ruling class behaves as if the ultimate source of authority were the people, and itself only an instrument of the people, a servant of the public weal --- in this precisely consists the democratic principle.

Louis said: *L'Etat, c'est moi*. That's not the democratic principle. That's the older, the aristocratic one, the principle of the ruler who ruled in his own right, and not by the right of an authority presumed to reside in an anonymous mass. There is nothing wrong with this principle. There can only be something wrong with the man who professes it. He may be weak, incompetent, unjust, and so, unfit to rule. For the end of government is justice, and justice is the foundation of all true political and social authority.

The new art of rule has reversed this. It says the foundation of all authority is public opinion. *C'est le peuple*. Justice follows from public opinion as a matter of course. If it doesn't, blame the people!

*Thus Louis only had to be just, and the people were with him. Today the people only have to be with the ruler, and ruler is just. God save the people!*

"It is not right to advise a prince to give way even in the smallest matter," Goethe said. And this, to be sure, was not currying favor with the monarch: it was

only another way of reasserting his will as ultimate authority. For authority, Goethe held, is an individual thing, and can be shared with no one. For authority is founded in and flows from the expression of the individual will. "The final decision of will," said Hegel, "is --- the monarch."

Thus, any leadership that feels itself impelled, consciously or unconsciously, to turn for its motive power in the will to an authority outside itself, in the masses, becomes hopelessly involved in a basic contradiction --- between a natural fact and an impossible ideal. The fact is that authority is indivisible, lodged in the individual will, and cannot be shared. The aim, implicit or explicit, is to share it. The result of such an unnatural state of affairs Nietzsche already stated a long while ago: "Our rulers," he said, "suffer inwardly from a bad conscience, and have to impose a deception on themselves in the first place in order to be able to command, just as if they also were only obeying. This condition of things ... I call the moral hypocrisy of the commanding class."<sup>7</sup>

We are moving closer to our more immediate woes and sorrows ... We repress and suppress the individual will to power under a cloak of false optimism about the nature of political man, and then we have the inevitable reaction. Our dictatorships are symptom perversions of the repressed power instinct. For, there should be no mistake, the will to power is an instinct. Dicta-

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7. Nietzsche: *Beyond Good and Evil*.



torship is on the social political plane what the neurosis is on the sexual. In the one case as in the other there is at once the abnormal reassertion of the original impulse, and the no less abnormal preoccupation with the repressive force. Thus, the elaborate system of thought control --- propaganda --- devised and maintained by the totalitarian states betrays at once an excessive recognition of the authority of the masses and a no less excessive desire to shake it off. The dictators are divided men, sick men, torn between the desire to heed the inner voice, on the one hand, and the voice of the people, on the other; crucified, as it were, between fear of the people and fear of themselves. Cæsarism is the price we pay for the repression of the political power instinct. Down with the Cæsars! ... We will properly and naturally seek to remove the dictators, but whom do we hope to replace them by? Enlightened rulers who know how to rule in their own right? We will replace them by a fresh crop of enlightened demagogues who rule by the right of the people, and thus rule neither in their own right nor by the right of the people. In the end they create the very condition which produced the dictators. We are back where we started; we are moving in a vicious circle. Necessarily: the democratic principle, founded as it is in a notion of political power that is as pernicious as it is untenable, can only end in a *pis aller*.

*Primary and Secondary Revolutions* ... There is only one way, you say, in which the existing order ends.

That is, by the under-dog becoming top-dog; and so all-dog; and so no-dog, but human being.

There is no doubt that there can be no change in the human consciousness without a change also in the structure of society. It is society that formulates the individual consciousness, you say. But this is only a half truth. There is the other half, that the individual formulates also the social consciousness. I believe there is an interdependent relation between the two, one acting and reacting on the other. The question as to which is the more important had better be left to the side; it is not to the point here. This much, however, is certain: a change in the social or individual consciousness cannot be effected without displacing the class in power by the class out of power; that is, without changing the social structure. With the proletariat displacing the bourgeoisie then, according to you, there will be a new society, hence a new social consciousness, hence also a new individual consciousness. But you overlook a crucial thing.

*There are changes and changes of human consciousness.* The French Revolution, for example, effected a change in the social and individual consciousness. But what was the nature of that change? Did it mean a *new* social and individual consciousness, or only another and modified form of the old consciousness? There was a re-arrangement, a re-ordering, a re-adjustment of the old pattern: but the pattern remained, that peculiar mould of human consciousness, Christian-European, that appeared with the fall of Rome and the rise of Christianity.

Marx was quite right when he looked upon revolutions as political-economic phenomena --- as far as he went. But he didn't go far enough. He had an eye, and a very sharp one, on what was closest to him, Western-European history. And within the limits of this historical cycle there have been no other revolutions in the strict sense in which he used the term. But I choose not to be arbitrarily confined to these limits; I choose to consider the larger frame of human history as it has unrolled over thousands and thousands of years. And within this larger frame there *is* another kind of revolution --- one that clears away the last crumbling remains of the old consciousness that has collapsed, and puts a new one in its place, which differs from the old one *qualitatively*. It is a *primary* revolution as opposed to the others which are *secondary*; a revolution of faith as opposed to the others which are political-economic revolutions. It is only in such a revolution that the displacement of the class in power by the class out of power *necessarily* means a new form of human consciousness. In the political-economic revolution it only means a change in the old. If the French Revolution succeeded in putting a new class into power, I am not so sure that the new top-dog was any less dog than the old top-dog. A new order of society springs from new roots in human consciousness. With the Proletarian under-dog scurrying into his new Jerusalem with his little bone, it will be simply new dog for old.

Russia affirms my basic suspicions. Russia is going the way of all the other countries, and of America in

particular. She has set up a thorough-going State regimentation to displace the wasteful, anarchic individual regimentation of the United States. About the only difference I see between her and ourselves is that Russia is more logical. But the true Communist Society cannot be established over night, you plead, Russia is only in the stage of transition, on the way to Communism. Give her a little more time. Give her a little more time to effect that famous withering of the State. I will! The result will be the same, only more marked. It cannot be otherwise. Russia is working with the very ends and means which have spelled the death of the present order which she is seeking so desperately to transplace. Russia is not laying the basis for a new order; she is bringing to a deadly close the old; carrying to a logical conclusion the historical process of decay which is Marxism.

From my standpoint the political-economic revolutions that have come and gone in our Western history are purely negative destructive phenomena, standing in the same relation to the prevailing consciousness as disease to the living organism. They have their symptoms and run their course very much like any other disease. They are inherent in the rise, growth and decay of any particular type of human consciousness.

The primary consciousness appears as the result of the primary revolution. But like every living organism, from the moment it appears, the forces of disease begin to play on it, begin their destructive course: *the political-economic revolutions appear*. They change, modify,

impair the social and individual consciousness, very much as time and age change and impair the body of man, his mind, his outlook on life and destiny. But mind and body are *qualitatively* no different from what they were at birth; they cannot be changed for others. Mind and body come from God, and we take what we are given, we do not choose. As time goes on, the political-economic revolutions become more virulent and destructive; they affect more and more the vital organs. The old forms, beliefs, traditions, begin to wither and fall away. Until finally the old consciousness is no more.

From such a viewpoint, the clash of interests constantly going on within society, as much as it is part of a struggle of classes, according to the Marxian dynamic, is, in the last analysis, only a phase of much larger struggle. It is an inherent expression of the basic or what I might call the life and death tensions in society as a whole. These are the vertical (the individual-aristocratic) and the horizontal (the mass-democratic). These tensions are in root opposition, and generate their appropriate movements. While society is still in form (aristocratic, an end in itself), its propulsion is *up*; it tends to move vertically. When it begins to deteriorate, it moves *down*, declines literally, the horizontal movement has gained over the vertical. It breaks down completely when as a result of the constant levelling-down movement, its base grows so thin for lack of vertical propulsion it can no longer support the weight of its own mass. We are not far from this point ourselves.

The primary revolution is a fresh vertical up-thrust. A vertical aristocratic line is established.<sup>8</sup> There are gradations between men and men; there is rank, class. The *vertical tension rules*, in full and unimpaired force. But only momentarily, as it were. Soon enough the opposite tension, the horizontal, begins to manifest itself. Political economic revolutions arise. As each such revolution, each such class eruption proceeds, the pressure begins to be felt more and more from the bottom; from the people: greater and greater numbers of people become involved, until finally the masses as one united class are swept up in the movement. It might even be said that the whole trend of revolution in a specific cycle of history is --- in the final sense --- a reflection of a continuous horizontal tension generated by the masses, and growing more and more marked as the cycle unrolls. Beginning with the top and gradually moving down, all class revolutions finally filter down to the masses, and dissolve, as it were, into the ultimate political-economic revolution --- the people's revolution. On this last front, on the democratic horizontal line, the remaining issues of the epoch are re-

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8. If, in this connection, we think of the rise of Christianity in relation to the new consciousness it ushered in, we should not be misled by the equality preached by Christ, and the pure Christianity of the gospels. As far as the Church which actually touched on the life of the masses was concerned, there was equality only before the Lord. On the temporal plane, the Church was a hierarchy of the strictest order.



solved; and the epoch comes to a close. The destruction of an arch-type of human consciousness is consummated by the masses. It is their victory --- and also their defeat.

But there is really no defeat. The cycle begins again. Life goes on. Out of the bloodshed and destruction which follows the rise of the masses, in the depths of the people themselves, there rises once more the deep burning desire, the deep burning need for order and integrity; for the rehabilitation of the human name. Slowly and quietly in the depths of the bruised body, a new vision stirs; a new life. Unknown and unheralded the new man of destiny arises to give it substance and shape: body; to lift the Word again into the realm of living deed. The day of the sword is over; the demonic power that drove men to their own destruction is over. Men settle themselves once more *within*, each in his proper place in a spiritual hierarchy of inward power which alone shapes and determines outward rank and station. A new vertical order is born.

We are at the end of an historical cycle, and the only question of still historical validity, as far as our period is concerned, is the liquidation, how to break free from the deadly grip of the present, the *frein mort*; and how to gain some sort of foothold on the future.

The possibility of a solution, in the sense at least in which society and the people in general are concerned, is past. Masses by their very nature move horizontally, with history or biology; they work out and fulfill inherent directions in the one or the other.

The Communist Revolution is the culmination of an organic horizontal movement that is still to spend itself. As it burns itself out, it will burn out the order which produced it. As for Fascism, it is a last desperate effort to *save*, to salvage something from the past that went out with the past. It talks of reviving blood, rank, class, as if these were things one can conjure out of the air, by some mystical formula. But they are living things of flesh and blood, born, shaped and moulded in the crucible of living reality. They have gone and perished with the reality that bore and nourished them. Between the two, between Communism that is actually committed to put an end to the present order and Fascism that consciously and deliberately seeks to preserve it, there should be no question as to which serves the time spirit best. The elementary logic of the case should settle that.<sup>9</sup>

If we are still to speak of any such thing as a solution, it must be in relation to the individual, and the individual strictly. He can find himself within, rediscover himself at that crucial point in the depths of being where past, present and future meet. This can be *his* unique contribution to that human *continuum* which preserves, like the links of a chain, a continuous process in historical enfoldment.

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9. The individual should take the same attitude to the Communist Revolution, in relation, of course, to Fascism, that Communists and Socialists in general take toward all liberal and progressive movements --- he should use it as part of *the Larger Front*: to help effect the general liquidation.

The true revolutionary action of today, then, consists of two things, the second even more important than the first: 1. liquidating the present order of consciousness; 2. laying the basis for a new. The first means complete and absolute negation of the present order with all that it stands for in a moribund art, economics, politics, religion, etc. The second means a new vision, a new courage, a new affirmation --- a primary revolution of faith. Where we find ourselves, the Proletarian Action or the Bourgeois Reaction as a positive constructive means toward a new order can only end in another and more deadly form of the consciousness we have to liquidate. There has to be the much larger revolution to do us any good. We stand on the ragged edge of ourselves. We have to make the hurdle of ourselves, jump. We have to get ourselves new bodies and new souls. The old are worn to a frazzle.



# VOYAGE TO EUROPE

by

HERVEY WHITE

*Friday, November 30, 1894 1 P.M.*

A dinner of bread and figs eaten by the roadside. On the whole the first morning has gone well. The first two hours were the hardest while I was making my way out of Naples. The knapsack choked me; but once warmed up, my coat off, and the shoulder straps tightened, I have come on much better.

The *Terra di Lavoro* is monotonous. The crop now seems to be mostly wheat, six inches high and green as emerald. Grape vines are everywhere. In the fields peasants are at work, but they seem to live in the villages. One great disadvantage about seeing is that the roads are sunk four feet below the level of the fields.

The people are curious about me, but kind. They seem pleased when I tell them I am from America. They think I have something to sell and one man has offered to buy my coat, shirt, or anything I may wish to dispose of. The day is perfection; sunshine and cool fresh air.

*7 P.M.*

The afternoon has been full of events. I found about

three o'clock that I had gone out of my way, of course. To be lost is my natural state in Italy. I struck the railroad, however, and as it seemed to have a good path beside it I decided to follow that. It was a great improvement, and being graded above the fields it gave me a better view; this was well for I was approaching the mountains. I had been walking steadily for an hour when some fellows accosted me, asking me to step across the track and take a drink. A jug of white wine was on the wall of a culvert. At first, I did not understand their kindness.

I could not drink enough to please them. I must sit down and rest. They helped me to unstrap my knapsack. They were five young hunters, and although they had a pack of dogs, they had only one shot gun. They were curious about my knapsack, but they were very polite and kind. I told them all about myself. We talked of the country, its fertility, and of what Victor Hugo had said of the *Terra di Lavoro*. During our conversation we drank repeatedly.

Half an hour later we made our farewells, and they all wished me good luck as if they had known me for years.

Everybody I meet asks me where I am going. Everyone wishes me a good journey at parting. I had planned to walk on to Casserta. But as it was close to sunset I asked one of the guards or flagmen at a crossing if he knew where I could get a bed, for I was still an hour from Casserta. Yes he knew of one in the village near by. How much would I have to pay, I asked. Well,

what was I willing to pay? Twenty cents, I said at a hazard. "You can get three beds for twenty cents," he laughed. "Six cents for one." Just then a hunter came along and I was told to follow him. We went through the winding stone-walled streets. On the way to the lodging house I stopped in a little shop and bought some bread and oranges for my supper.

There are six beds in my room, but only one other besides my own is to be occupied, and that by a peddler. We are good friends already. He is dipping his fingers in the oil of our lamp and carefully rubbing some old black lace and silk sleeves with his oily hands. This process I learn makes them look like new. He has purchased them today from a sick woman. I ask him how he likes his life. He is not discontented. He has no family. Some days he makes a few cents, some days nothing. He has no home, he has nothing to look forward to in his old age, and he is fifty-five now. I write these lines while he works over his lace. We talk of the differences of costs and customs in different countries. There is much in common between us. He wants me to go with him tomorrow to Casserta, but I wish first to have a look at the village. He is asleep now and I am left uninterrupted to my writings.

The beds consist of two spring boards stretched on an iron frame. Mattresses and covers are rolled up during the day at the head of the bed. The linen is clean. I wonder how my peddler's bed will look in the morning, for he did not wash the oil from his hands. There is a chair by each bed and one common wash-



stand, a table also, and a drinking glass. The light consists of some fat and a wick in a holder shaped like a candlestick, but flaring at the top for the bowl of oil. Little notches are made to keep up the wicking. The whole is made of coarse pottery, but is not ungraceful and has its rude decorations.

How peacefully my peddler sleeps. My room is high and airy; white walls, with but one picture --- an advertisement for a steamer from Naples to New York. I know what that means. How clean the passengers look in this picture!

*Saturday, December 1. 6 P.M.*

*Capua.*

I am weary this evening, for last night I was restless and could not go to sleep. Things began to bite; they were not all fleas either. The Campanile was next door, so I lay and counted off the quarter hours. A funny old man came in and amused me for an hour, muttering in the dark as he made endless preparations for bed. About eleven I dozed for half an hour, then awoke and kept up the watch all night. My friend the peddler seemed peaceful enough. To be sure he arose at midnight and smoked a tranquil pipe, clumping about the room in his wooden shoes, lighting up his long skirted figure occasionally with a fresh match. But in time he was sleeping again as vociferously as ever, and the quarter hours were dragging. Adding to my nervousness was the rain falling all the night. But at daybreak I fell asleep for another half hour.

When I awoke again, I found that the rain had

stopped and that the peddler had gone off before me.

Walking into Casserta, with the surrounding miles of the most fruitful soil on the earth is something always to be remembered. And yet for me there is nothing attractive about this garden of agriculture. One can much better love a more barren soil, even if it is as flat and monotonous as this. I know not why, but I long to get away from it. It is vulgar in its wealth, too excessive, too secure if you like, too fulsome.

As I reflect on what I have said, my dislike takes reason and outline. In a land where harvests are always sure and where there are three and four every year, each exactly equal to the others, I see how all interest goes from life. There is none of the work and seizing of opportunities for the farmer, none of the endurance of hardship, none of the shrewd calculations. No, all has been calculated carefully for hundreds of years before him. Plow so much, plant so much seed, employ so many laborers, the result is exactly proportional. There is nothing new for him to learn, no hazardous experiment to try, no chance even of a failure. With the laborer it is much the same as with the farmer. Population has risen up to its limit. Every inch of this garden is cultivated, the agriculture machine goes on, the result is a vulgarized people.

I have found good lodgings in Capua, and this evening have taken a walk about the fortified little town with the circling river around its walls. It was very beautiful, very calm and mediæval in the purpling of the evening twilight. A guard challenged me from

the wall. I felt how different it all was from America. The people in the narrow streets were so colorful. The slipping water of the Volturnus swung under the stone bridge, around me was the flat land of work; towards the mountains led the old road to Rome. I listened to catch the eloquence of Spartacus and recited to myself the old speech, the supposed one that he never made, but which is made by every school boy.

What a joy it was to walk without the choking of my knapsack! But how accursedly lonesome I am through this wandering. The day has been cold and windy and naturally I am uneasy in starting. Tomorrow if I make a good walk I shall feel better. If I find I am fretting too much I may give up walking altogether, and get a third class ticket to Rome. Still the walk is what I want most of all. I must get used to never seeing the same face twice.

*Capua. Sunday, December 2, 7:30 A.M.*

A good night's sleep in a good bed has put my spirits up to normal again. My room was clean and large. I paid thirty cents, but it was offered me for twenty five. One of my blunders with a strange money. I overpaid the landlord and he took it, saying meanwhile that it was very little. The sky is clear today, but there is a cold wind. Now good-bye to Spartacus and Capua.

*St. Gajaniello, 7:30 P.M.*

As soon as I left the level land and came into the mountains, the beauty of Italy began for me again. Now it was no longer a blustering November day; the

air was still, the skies were of May, and the light and shadow lay warm and soft on the tree-tufted hillsides. Now and again I would see a gray castle with its surrounding village crowning an isolated hill top. I have yet to see a more beautiful thing than a city like this rising from a hill top. I think again all I thought of the white city near Gibraltar, only here the effect is different; the stern gray walls and towers on their village pedestal all nestling in the soft green of the surrounding mountains. The castles are become a part of the landscape; they are not foreign as houses nowadays are apt to be. One cannot imagine the hill without the castle, nor can he think of the castle without the hill.

As I wanted to make a good day's work I thought it would pay me to take to the railroad. I was told by several of the watchmen that it was forbidden to walk there, but they always ended by telling me that I could go on after I had offered to go off. I finally asked an officer at a station and he told me that it was forbidden, but that I could go all right if the guards would let me.

By two o'clock, however, the surrounding country was so beautiful that I took to the carriage road out of choice, it was so much more in harmony with everything; besides passing all the houses. Then, too, I did not need to watch my feet so closely for the railroad path is narrow, and if I came to a rise of ground I went over it, not through it. On the whole I shall do my best to keep free of the railroad after this, using it as a guide, not as a highway.

At one o'clock the wind rose again and clouds and

rain-squalls were in the mountains and around me. As I found good lodging at this place at three o'clock, I decided to stop. I had gone twenty miles and the wind was very cold.

I have found that the way to find lodging is to go to the restaurant, for there are usually a few rooms above fitted with beds. Here twenty cents for a room or ten cents for a bed in the common room. I shall always take the common room as I have done tonight if the beds seem the same. Here no one has come in yet and only one bed besides mine is prepared. The room is much like the one I described the first night out, only better painted and with neater beds. I do not hesitate to examine the mattress while making the bargain either. All right this time, too, though fleas are plenty.

I sat for an hour or so in the wine shop below. There is a block of masonry built up in the middle of the floor and on this there is a pile of coals and hot ashes. We kept fairly warm around this makeshift, but I was tired and did not try to talk. Besides I find that I can understand nothing that these people say unless I ask them repeatedly and make them go slowly.

After eating of my own bread, figs and sausage, I lie here on my bed with my feet warm and cosy in the covers and my own candle strapped to the back of a chair according to the old camp fashion. It takes camp life to teach one how to make a candlestick out of a string and various other comforts as well. Here are my books, my novel, the things that make my home. How differ-

ent from my feeling last night. I think it was due to that flat land. Now I know there is a gray castle-crowned hill just back of me in the windy darkness. I know that miles of wonders stretch ahead of me, and what is something too, I know that on twenty cents a day I can make my six dollars last for thirty days, and surely I will be in Rome by that time.

The guards of the railroad that I spoke of need more mention before I leave them. Every quarter of a mile or so, and always at every crossing is a tiny house where the guard has his bed and clothes and I think he usually eats there. He has also a little garden along the side of the track. Perhaps every other house is for a family, two stories, four rooms altogether. Here the garden extends almost to a field and flowers are often planted in front. The men sit by the track waiting or working as they like, blowing their horns when a train comes and closing the cross gates; for this a man gets thirty cents a day. They keep the road beds carefully leveled and the outer edge of the pebbled ballast is lined with the accuracy of a well kept garden walk. A curious quiet peaceful irresponsible life surely, and well fitted to the Italian climate and disposition.

*December 3, 6:30 P.M. S. Germano.*

Once more I have paid my thirty cents for a room and am living the life of a gentlman.

A ten cent breakfast, pork chop and bread, fortified me as I started off this morning on a thirty five mile tramp that brought me to this little village. When I set out in the morning the air was cool and there was snow



on the surrounding mountains. It was a moody April day: showers, sunlight, sudden illusions of castled hill-tops, then at two o'clock a heavy shower followed by a startlingly brilliant double rainbow.

I made my lunch from acorns that I picked up while walking between showers. These acorns must be very good, for the peasants are gathering them everywhere and the swine too are crunching them greedily. They are certainly nutritious, for I felt not the least of hunger, but after the first ten or fifteen I confess I found them a little bitter. But I did not wish to go out of my way hunting for bread, and at the places I stopped to wait for sudden showers to pass, I was unable to buy any.

The countryside here is full of women, knitting and spinning as they watch the goats, sheep, cattle, geese and swine; the men work with wooden plows driving the wide horned cattle; young girls I met on the roads were wearing blouses with white sleeves and full purple skirts. After arriving here and establishing my place of lodging, I went out again before sunset wandering about the narrow, climbing, tortuous streets of this curious little village. Just now I am watching the beautiful passing faces of the women here as they loom and fade past me in the deepening twilight. They are the loveliest women I have ever seen.

*December 4, 6:30 A.M.*

*(in bed)*

I must make some convulsing blunders in my endeavor to speak Italian. For example yesterday,

while at a farm house waiting for the rain to pass, I wished to ask if there were lodgings to be had on this side of Monte Cassino. I could not think of the expression for "on this side of" so after various failures I sat down on the door step and with the aid of my finger made the following inquiry. (I may first say that the Spanish word for "here" is "who" in Italian) "Now look" I said, and my Italian runs very easily to Spanish, pointing impressively to a diagram I had made in the dust. "Who is Monte Cassino? Who are we? Now can I get lodgings who, or who, or who?" It did not occur to me for two hours after why they did not understand so lucid an explanation.

*4P.M. Arce.*

This day has been a steady trudge and pack over a level, sloppy and somewhat monotonous road, till about two o'clock when I entered the clear air of a narrow valley and I began to hope for a village and lodgings. It came and I was directed to this place, and poor enough it looked upon entering the courtyard. I climbed to the third floor and engaged a ten cent bed. Then I opened the window, and looking out on the gold green and russet of the sun flooded valley I wondered why I should strive to reach Rome in three more days when here was all I could ask for with rest and acquaintance with people.

I have been counting all along on getting to Rome before Sunday, as I fear that will not be a good day to look up lodgings there; but why not after Sunday as well? There is a ruined castle on the hill behind me.

The sound of bagpipes floats to my ears. From my window I watch the women of the village, in their white linen head dresses and white waists with flowing sleeves, swarming by the brooks washing and bathing together. I see again the tall slender girls bearing the great jars on their heads. The evening light is in the clouds. Oranges are on the tree beneath my window. A smell of something good is coming up from the kitchen. Yes! I'll let Rome wait a few days.

*(to be continued)*





## POEM

Remote and beyond, the diamond-spangled cities blazon  
the night;  
The sea-ward running rivers, draining the continental  
flanks,  
Move in the dark, move down the mountains, suck silt  
from the plains land;  
On inland ridges the forest dreams in the cloud;  
And lost in the sky, from twilight to twilight,  
Bats flying, night-birds crying the far-running currents:  
From here to Bombay the shadow halving the sphere,  
And the stars burn.

This window yielding starlight  
There can be seen dimly the chairs,  
The mirror lost in the corner gloom, and one half of  
the rug;  
There can be seen roses, and blurred on the bed  
The heavy and mobile masses of the female form:  
Belly and flank, the deep breasts, the slow lines curved  
and alive.  
Perceive with your fingers the barbaric thighs;  
Perceive with your mute and ravenous hands the flame  
and the strength of the flesh.

Deep in the crust the massive and dormant stone of  
the earth  
Swings at the core, the bulk turns, the weight turning  
on the tipped axis  
Hangs to that line, the atom-smashing pressures war  
at the center,  
Straining the charged and furious dark

What there is in this room  
Lies in the nameless relation, personal and intense,  
Between woman and man who have seen in themselves  
the secret edge.  
What there is in this room is seen vivid and clear, un-  
softened by sentiment,  
The bright focus burning the flesh, the spirit perceiving  
the tide of that wideness that sleeps at the bone,  
That moved the dim cell in the sun's light  
And the lift of the sea.

And the stars, remotely over serria, rise to the curve;  
The Bull and the Hunter lift from the hills.  
Under their light and the lean of a roof  
The quickening flesh wakes another beauty,  
Eyes drown in the storm, lips dwindle to darknesss,  
The sensitive limbs in the growth of that splendor  
Lose identity, become nameless and flaming extensions  
of force ---

Earth booming round sun bears a shining of plasm  
That now for a moment in the naked night  
However it knew Betelguese his bulk  
And the yeared space, and its own smallness,  
Rivals the splendor, a light for the wonder of all the  
far stars,  
And time and space a sea for its flashing, and the  
blinded suns ---  
That surge flooding consciousness roars back the ages  
To what presence there is, inscrutable and remote,  
awake at the last  
In the music that sings at a star's death,  
Or the nature of night, that has border nor bulk, and  
needs nothing.

Sleep flesh; dream deeply you nerves ---  
The storms of the north are over Alaska ---  
This seed of the earth, this seed of the hungering flesh,  
Drives in the growth of the dark.

*William Everson*





## SUMMER NOON

The green bean stretches a mile or more to the west;  
The luminous wind of summer burns over the world.  
In a month the leaves of the bean will be brittle and  
    curled,  
Unlovely, lean, whispering without rest.

Come into the kitchen; we'll drink, till the heat is over,  
Wine diluted with water from the cool well,  
While the wind sifts shrill through the flowerless pear,  
    and a smell  
Drifts into the window of dying flowers of clover.

Why do you listen and wonderingly stare, not drinking?  
The light of late June flows in and lies on the floor,  
And gleams on the curve of your throat. I have shut  
    the door.  
And a mockingbird is singing. What were you thinking?

I was not thinking --- listening, fearing to hear,  
Hearing only the sounds in the air. Do you understand?  
Only the sound of the wind in the summer land,  
The vroom of bees, the bird, and your voice at my ear.

*Brewster Ghiselin*



## POEM FOR A NEIGHBOUR

In the sea-march where I carve the harsh shallows  
On the turfed rock rise a shock of willows  
Stockdoves, fireflies, sea-gulls, bats from the hollows.

In the sea-marsh where outlaws starve with my Molly  
On open knoll scrolls of black alder sea holly  
Instead of the screech-owl's extravagant folly.

In the sea-marsh where the buzz-hawk's talk is drover,  
On sea-pulses, rag-tag, lurking circles, clover,  
Love-sick flicks light the nightmares of our half-drunk  
lover.

In the sea-marsh now springtime graves new paved  
with dew  
On Ovid's buckler a trysting moon to Tresaith grew  
Winnowed the heathcocks, magpies, cranes, sea-eagles  
flew.

*Keidrych Rhys*



## ABSENT CREATION

I wait for wonder, or the weather's turn  
To teach my tongue to wind its tangled skein  
Of loss, or love; lilt out its awkward words  
Or learn a rhythm from the weaving rain.

I await that ease and excellence of mind  
That intimates suave movement to the hand,  
Letting the typewriter shuttle off its lines  
To a slow march, or stately sarabande.

But time and tide-turn, running past the ear,  
Seethe with distraction on a wasting sound,  
The hour-sounds plunge, my fingers plough through  
care,  
I hear an endless clock thud underground.

Upon this desert coast, this sea exanimate  
Lord, burst a cyclone, or a soothing rain,  
Detonate dams, flood cities, souse or intoxicate  
That I may live, and feel, and speak again!

*Derek S. Savage*



# *BIG FIDDLE*

*by*

*KAY BOYLE*

## I

The American music got a contract that summer in the place the Austrians had been brought to London to yodel in: the tall delicate one with light loose hair who sang high and clear like a shy girl calling from height to height and blushed like a girl whenever the English applause began; and the one who played the zither, and the two who did the schuhplattler dance and yiped like yokels as they leaped before the ladies and gentlemen in evening-dress seated at the tables. You had to think of them now, the four wearing their lederhosen, black leather embroidered in gold and white, and broad red silk ties, as belonging to another nation although nothing had changed in their faces. In between their numbers, the American band, piano, saxophone, violin, drum, and the bass-viol came on. To the Austrian entertainers the place, the language, the country, were adventure, but this time without any recklessness or peril to it: an adventure, it might be,

in fortune and security for once. They had come a long way from insolvency to this sight of the safe and the indifferent, permitted, by the dispensation of awe, to become spectators at the same time that they performed; contrapted clowns forgetting their gags for a minute while they looked at the spectacle of fur-wraps rich enough to keep the whole Tirol in comfort for a generation, and at food --- abundant, varied, great platters of discarded, unwanted food. But to the American music, this joint wasn't anywhere near as good as the night-club they'd been playing in back in Los Angeles, or as classy as the one they'd been playing in before that.

They'd play stud-poker while they waited to go on, and it was only the bass-viol who never wanted to play. Or else in that room, green-room or whatever it was off the entertainers' stage, they'd talk about what they'd left behind and what they'd go back to at the end of August: in six weeks their wives or their children or their girls wouldn't be names any more, but touch and presence, demands, exasperation, the unlettered but regulated pact of love. Only the bass-viol said nothing; he came in quietly and he leaned, tall, stoop-shouldered, young, against the jamb in the doorway, smoking and looking out onto the platform where the Austrians did their jigs. His hair was black and limp, a little artistic looking because a little long, his shoulders bony but broad in his tuxedo jacket, and above them hung the face like a small blanched flower on the drooping emaciated stem, incongruously small and fine, like a

child's face only worn by famine or uncertainty to something else, or like a dwarf's made uncanny by age. The skin was white, the dark uneasy eyes not quite defeated yet but on the run. They were fixed on the zither-player for the moment, but hopelessness or illness or both were just behind in hot pursuit. The wrist and the hand with the cigarette in it, even seen so emerging from the white cuff and dangling across the shirt-front, were pale, and the long broad-terminated fingers double-jointed.

"Big Fiddle gathering wool," the piano said, jerking his chin up from the cards he held.

"Gathering edelweiss this time," the drum said. He put two cards down and asked for two.

The bass-viol had been six months with them, and like the rest of them he was young, but that was the end of any likeness they shared. He might have been as foreign as any of the Austrians out there in their leather shorts with the flowers in needlework on their braces. He leaned against the door-jamb watching them dance and listening to the language they warbled in their throats, and even when the time came for him to walk out on the platform with the other Americans, the foreignness, not of nation or of race, but the unutterable separateness, the alien and seemingly incurable thing went with him. Even the instrument he carried was too big, too unwieldy, and when they began to play, the bass-viol sobbed deeply alone: "Oh, cure me, cure me," while the others swung, "Life Begins at Oxford Circus, Give Worry the Bird, Things Look Rosy if You



Know How to Look," banging the notes out, roaring their hearts out to cure him, to comfort him, to give him the remedy. "You're a Good Kid, You're Young Yet, Footloose and Fancy Free," they howled, slapping him, swinging him out of loneliness and shyness and introspection into the back-clapping, fast-talking, tap-dancing ambulance with all the bells clanging, rushing him towards the operating-theatre of happiness and sanity.

But in the end, their own bewilderment and shyness stopped the music, cut short the life-line of normal speech which had not managed to reach him quite. They could drop an arm across his shoulders going off the platform, but the chasm which even their laughter could not cross was there. He and the Austrians --- good kids, first-rate entertainers, but something farcical about them too. There was something inept, inadequate in them which the night-club lingo couldn't cover and couldn't give a ringside table to; and there wasn't any dictionary compiled yet for outsiders to buy and thumb through for the right word or the current expression. The thesaurus for the uneasy, the lonely, the despairing, was not yet off the press.

"Big Fiddle's heading south when we break up," the saxophone said, dealing the cards out while the Austrians danced. This was the first they'd heard of it, and not until the next day when the bass-viol told them at Lyons' Corner House at lunch did they know it was a doctor said he'd better take a rest.

"Not a regular doctor, but one of these here neuro-

logists," Big Fiddle said, blurting the words out between draws on his cigarette. His eyes were lowered, moving quickly, aimlessly, perhaps sightlessly, from knife to plate, to fork, to hand. "I think I got an attack of nerves," he said, and he blotted the half of the cigarette out in what remained of the food.

"How's your silver-side, old horse?" asked the drum, faking an English accent nonchalant and high.

"Oh, top-hole," said the violin in falsetto. He screwed the monocle that wasn't there into his eye's socket.

"I'm all sort of jittery," the bass-viol went on, fumbling for the next cigarette. "Maybe it's got a name, like jazzmonia or swingitus or something like that," he said, trying hard. "I've been shaky off and on a year now." The saxaphone and the drum and the piano watched the hand that brought the cigarette out, watched the fingers, their extremities permanently blunted and grooved and calloused by the pressure of the metallic strings. "Said I ought to travel around a bit, see new places," he said. His fingers had the match now and his cheeks sucked in. "That's what this guy said anyway." His eyes began again, travelled uneasily over the table, counting the plates, scraping them clean, stacking them; putting the glasses one inside the other, carrying them away. "Says I ought to see new faces, do something different from what I've been doing."

"Might try taking up music for a change," said the big drum, eating.

"Sure," said Big Fiddle. He turned the look of betrayed and bewildered youthfulness away. "Sure. No

kidding. I never had any aversion to Mozart."

"He got hold of some pretty good airs at that," said the piano.

"Pardon me if I seem coarse," said the violin, "but what about rhino?"

"I got enough," said the bass-viol, and they saw him flush. "I got a little put away." His eyes shifted from the nails of his hand to the cloth of the piano's English tweed from a chain-tailor shop off Piccadilly, to the table next, and back to the Cheddar cheese, and stopped. "I thought it might turn out --- I mean, maybe if you wanted me to --- I was just thinking that if you don't get the chance to sign up somebody better --- I mean, once you're over home and wanted somebody later --- "

"Wait," interrupted the drum. He raised one hand and held it poised for absolute quiet while he brought out the clean white folded handkerchief from his breast-pocket and opened it carefully before his own bright-jowled and shining face. "All right," he said, holding it ready. "All right, now; open the sluices, Big Fiddle. Open them if you insist --- "

The saxophone stretched his arm in its minutely-checked, black and white wool sleeve across the back of the bass-viol's chair and his fingers gripped Big Fiddle's shoulder in an almost perfect imitation of heartiness and ease.

"Like the guy in the comic-strip: five exclamation points, a dozen asterisks, and S.W.A.K., and how!" he said.

"Oh, I say, how's your silver-side doing, old blank-et?" said the artificially English and artificeally high accent of the drum.

"Oh, making a cheerful noise, a VERA cheerful noise," said the violin loftily. He lifted the non-existent monocle on its ribbon and twisted it, his mouth contorted, into the socket of his eye. It was this that saved them from the necessity of looking at Big Fiddle for a moment, and from the embarrassment of not laughing uproariously aloud.

## II

He awoke in inexplicable alarm in the strange boarding-house and lay a while not moving in the dark. For a time he did not dare to move because of the trace left, either on hearing or memory, of that cry of warning that had either been given while he slept or else was just about to be uttered. The street-light was still lit on the esplanade outside and in relief against its bright white ambience the curtain's coarse lace rose, webbed, convoluted, and like a dying breath expired: the design of ferns and roses borne limply forward into the room's darkness toward the bed and then drawn back upon the wet night air, the pattern, gaps, repairs where sections of other lace had been set in, machine-made notations of rag and weed indelibly inked against the artificial light.

You, said the specialist for the shakes and quivers sitting in an office as monstrous in recollection now as the presence of quiet in the boarding-house, call a spade a spade, don't beat around the bush: say it, name it,

discuss it, bring it out where you can see it. Whatever you keep to yourself festers there inside your head, said the doctor's voice, or else the mere immobility of silence phrased it. Give it a name, give it a date, give it a locality; don't let it rot in vagueness in you. If there's any blame to be taken for anything, take it. I don't know your story, but don't evade it. (If everything's to be put on me, said Big Fiddle lying straight and long, his fists clenched in the boarding-house bed, why not pass the whole buck to me and be done with it and quit talking about right or wrong? Why not say I'm responsible for the whole lousy deal and the cards they slipped into the pack?) You, said the doctor, have got to look it in the eye. Give it a nomenclature and half the battle's won. (Sure, said Big Fiddle, stabbed with irritation now, call it Mae West or Wally Simpson or General Franco and it fades into thin air.)

A hell of a lot you know about it, he said and he reached his hand out, shaking even in the dark, towards the open and half-emptied package of American cigarettes on the night-pedestal, reached for the lighter next and struck its little flame. As he drew the first lungful of smoke in he felt something abruptly cease, un-nameable but as present as if a vacuum cleaner or a sewing-machine had stopped functioning in the room. Instead he could hear now the sound of waves breaking shallow and close outside on the shore. He pressed his bones back into the mattress, stretched for a minute in what was too spasmodic for relief, and exhaled the smoke. You woke up just in the nick, he said. You made one

more pretty get-away from sleep; you fooled the stage manager and the impresario and the peacock paraders sitting down front. They thought they had you laid out unconscious until daybreak anyway, but you gave them the slip.

The bed sagged narrow and single as a hammock, and lying in it he felt the stamping of his heart. So as long as the heart's going this wouldn't be the eternity box then, he said, but just the dress rehearsal for it. The room was nothing better than a corridor leading to the window, a strip of matting down the length of it, the smell of mildew and bedbugs and cockroaches familiar, strong. He'd been in worse furnished-rooms in other seaside towns in the country he'd come away from. He remembered the drum's voice speaking in imitation of the voices that were not like theirs, and he said aloud the thing he'd been saying all the way since the junction where the train switched: The garden part of England now, except the landscape gardener forgot about putting the holly-hocks and cockleshells in. The only flowers I've seen since I struck the place are the ones on the chamber-pot and the carpet on the stairs they've haven't thought about sweeping this year yet and maybe won't. Or the flowers of sleep that bloom beyond, his misery said; the pillows full of poppies compressed into one of those doses he told me I'd better cut down on before the habit sewed me up. I told him I'd been trying to sleep through a night for more than a year now, and name it, name it was what he said. Tell me or tell your priest what's keeping you



awake at your age. Did you ever try detective stories? Big Fiddle jerked forward in the bed and smeared the cigarette out in the tray and fumbled the package for another. The priest knows, he said snapping the lighter open; but that never rocked me to sleep at night, that never took anything off my mind. And a book, any book, I don't care what it is, it'll put you to sleep for a couple of hours but that's all it can do. There isn't a detective they've invented who could do anything but provide me with three-quarters of an hour's sleep before midnight, and there isn't a criminal keeping a starry-eyed public in shrieks and whispers who jells. Criminal, he repeated. He said it twice over to himself, criminal, before he began, without ink or paper or without turning the light on, to write the nightly letter home.

It began Father O'Malley, dear Father: the name taken in vain as names in insomnium are taken, and there was no address, no fixed abode, no street, no door, no recognizable entry-way to home at which it might be delivered. Now that I've taken some time off to myself, Father, and am not working for a month anyway, I want to take this opportunity of telling you. Dear Father O'Malley, it began again; I'm sure you'll be surprised hearing from me after all the time that's passed and from a foreign port at that. A lot of water has flowed under the bridge since I last saw you, Father, and now it is my heartfelt wish to make this attempt ... it is my earnest des ... Listen, Father, after having borne the blame unjustly the way I did and never open-

ing my mouth about it but taking it all in the neck, I want to explain to you now how it happened because it isn't the way you and Mrs. Carrigan think it happened. Oh, it isn't, isn't it, said Father O'Malley hitching his paunch up under his jacket with the inside of his arm the way he had a habit of doing. My boy, how it happened or where it happened is neither here nor there, but say it, say it out if it eases your mind, and let no man be your judge. I'm here to give you comfort and support the way I gave it to you when you were a little more than a babe back in the Home and no earthly mother or earthly father so that the Father the faith provides us all with took their place amply and to spare, said Father O'Malley jerking his stomach into place with the flat of his wrist.

Hear me out then, Father, he said sitting up quickly in the bed and grinding the half-consumed cigarette into the dish on the night-pedestal by his side. Hear me out once and for all, for I tell you before God the Father, and before Christ, the son of Mary, and before the Holy Ghost, I tell you the punishment's been out of all proportions. Out of proportion to what, my child, said Father O'Malley, speaking kindly, patiently to him. Big Fiddle, sitting up in bed in the dark room, wiped the sweat from his palms into the boarding-house sheet and muttered: To whatever you want to call it! Say it, my boy, say it, don't be afraid, said Father O'Malley, and he sat down beside the bed and took his rosary out. All right, the crime then, the crime, Big Fiddle cried savagely out; out of proportion to the crime!

But now it was no longer the time for him to speak, for the priest's voice went on intoning with the soft whispering and breaking of the sea outside:

"Let us pray, Lord God who hast spoken by Thine Apostle James, saying: Is any man sick among you? Let him call in the priests of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord will raise him up; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him: cure, we beseech Thee, O Our Redeemer, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, the ailments of this sick man; heal his wounds and forgive his sins; drive out from him all pains of body and mind, and mercifully restore to him full health, both inwardly and outwardly ... "

Or else the letter home began Dear Mrs. Carrigan, as if home had not been a place where they had all dressed alike in clothes somebody else cast off and Mrs. Carrigan cut down; matron for mother, priest as male substitute for the incurably dead or hopelessly vanished males. Dear Mrs. Carrigan, I want to tell you the whole truth of the story now, because the way things happened I never had the right chance to tell you. I was three years younger then than I am now to all intents and purposes, Mrs. Carrigan, and a lot of water has flowed under the bridge, both up and down. But the way I feel, I know I'm ten years older today because of all the trouble and regret and penitence I've been through. I never seem to be able to get on at all because of what happened to me. But I'm not writing to ask

you for any help, Mrs. Carrigan. I just want to tell you the truth now the way I couldn't tell it to you then.

All right, the truth, he said almost aloud in the dark, and then he went on relentlessly, impatiently: All right, say it, see it, admit it the way the guy up in London said to admit it. Tell it this time without leaving anything out. See the room exactly, the plaster bust of Handel, the November street outside the window and the trolley-cars passing, the cross-town cars; see the door opening, and yourself, see even yourself seated at the table with the blotter on it and the ruler and the inking-pen, copying the score for the Conservatory's children's orchestra: Bach-Gounod's "Ave Maria" distorted by the shaved-head and orphaned gut-scrappers, the under-sized and under-fed ivory-tickers into the Foundlings' Blues. (Because I had a neat accurate hand then in the days when I was still going to be a concert violinist, that was the use they had for it: sitting afternoon after afternoon when the dishes were washed copying out the arrangements so the unwanted and unloved too meek and tender still for wantonness could play the sob songs for pop and mom to writhe with the maggots to in Potters' Field, skeleton-swinging it under the sod.) See the door open, he said, sure, see it, face it, don't look the other way. See it open, he repeated, and then suddenly he reached out and jerked the light on and without seeing anything else in the room picked up the box of tablets from among the litter of ash, the packet with the cigarettes spilling out of it, the detective story, open, and spread face-down.

"I can take two," he said out loud. "I didn't take any when I came to bed so I can take two now."

He stayed only the one night in the place, leaving after breakfast the next morning: a tall, stooping young man going down the street in a brown hat and a belted canvas-colored waterproof. He carried his American valise in one hand as he walked under the drizzle. Across the avenue from him the grey unflagging sea broke audibly, hollowly on the shingles, the line of it interrupted by the row of bathing-cabins. His head hung forward, the vulnerable precocious skull of a tall boy grown too fast bearing a face that flickered with indecision, too intent, too ardent, and borne on the body's nib as a candle bears its fierce small precarious flame. When he reached Marine Crescent he saw the policeman at the intersection of the ways and he at once made the instinctive detour to avoid him, swinging the suitcase from one hand to the other, jerking his hatbrim down. Then, as if thinking better of it, he turned again in the direction he had come and crossed from "Devon's Best" to where Fore Street joined the esplanade and put down his suitcase. There he deliberately addressed the policeman, striving to look with ease into that face and see the neat moustache clipped close, the strap buckled underneath the thick shaved jowls, and not succeeding; trying to see as advocate, ally (and not succeeding), the force, the judgment, the implacability of law.

"He seemed a bit nervous," the policeman said when the time for questioning came. "I didn't like the

look of him, acting so uneasy like and being a foreigner and all. So after he'd got the information out of me about the busses running to Plymouth, I thought it wouldn't do any harm to jot down a memo in my book. Just enough to keep it mind in case anything came up."

"Good job," said the Superintendent. "Glad to see somebody's keeping a sharp eye out in the district."

"I wouldn't have taken any notice of him at all," said the policeman, loosening up at this, "but for the way he seemed trying to avoid passing by me first, and then of a sudden changes his mind and comes smack over to me and starts asking about the busses to Plymouth. He seemed in a tearing hurry to get out of the vicinity and I thought 'hold on a bit there, sir, hold on.' So I kept him talking there a while, kind of studying him like, the way I wouldn't if I hadn't thought he was acting queer. Robbery came into my mind, seeing the suitcase and the agitated state he was in. I came to the conclusion he was just brazening it out making himself cross back over the street that way and come smack up to me face to face when he could have got the same information at the sweetshop or the chemist's or just by stepping inside Trump's."

"Right you are," said the Superintendent reaching for the telephone.

"Then when he starts in talking about checking the suitcase straight through to Plymouth while he breaks the trip somewhere along the line, I don't know what to think," said the policeman after the London number was given. "I said to myself, either he's a deep one



all right or else I've been right off the track from the start. I was in two minds whether he was talking about breaking the trip around Dartmoor somewheres like that so he could see the country like he said, or whether it was to throw me off the scent by pretending he didn't give a hoot if the suitcase got out of his hands ---"

"Are you there?" asked the Superintendent, speaking to London across the wire.

## III

The grass he stood on at the edge was yellow and cropped short, but the island lying in the water far below had managed to retain the quality of spring. At the foot of the cliff there was this piece of earth tossed out, cast off, expelled as if by force from England's soil, with only the sheerest strip of water lying between it and the steep lime coast. It seemed in itself a wild miniature continent no man had come to yet, dripping even now in summer with a dark wet subterranean green, its interior vallied and ravined with emerald-colored and eternally fresh mosses which from this height might have been taken for evergreen and fir. Its highlands were cragged with turrets of bare castle-like stone, its lowlands swayed with pale fields of mock-grain or savage grass. It might have been anywhere, he thought: something he'd heard said about Scotland or Ireland or seen photographed in a magazine in a dentist's office, or maybe a colored travelogue he'd seen in a moving-picture theatre; while beyond it the ocean

spread, vast, circular, incredibly flat and silent like a lake in Canada he'd passed by rail.

There it is, sure, he said to the immense deafness and speechlessness. Another continent. What all the explorers are looking for. A place to start over again in when you've got off on the wrong foot somewhere else; to wade over or swim over to and start again at scratch with people who don't know what trouble you've been in before or even what your name is. All of them, the big names you read in the papers about, starting out for Africa or the South Pole, looking for a place where the cards aren't stacked against them, whatever classy title they give it: scientific research, exploration in the interest of whathaveyou, it only means they're out looking for some place else to make a big noise in because they weren't making a big or loud enough noise at home. All of them out for the same thing, the guys who go up in the air or get stuck on an ice-floe hunting for what, or the ones who go floating about under water, they're the saps with the biggest grudges of all. They're out for a change of environment, sure; because back home they played to the gas night after night or took nothing but brodies. I got their numbers all right, Big Fiddle said.

He had got off the bus and left the suitcase at the tea-house inland; because it was only twelve o'clock then, there'd be an hour to wait before they'd serve him food. But the card was up so he could read what there might be: Devonshire Splits with strawberry jam and clotted cream, hot crabs, fruit salad with real

Devonshire Cream, prawn salad, ham and tongue sandwiches, egg and cress sandwiches, tea. He thought of the food that wasn't marked there and that he couldn't have eaten either, of the recognizable names printed as testimony that he had a language in common if not with individuals at least with a nation: the waffles, hamburgers, doughnuts, the hot-dogs that were not advertised but were there in memory's or custom's desperate attestation that he had a parlance, an acknowledged and contemporary speech. The label "foreign" did not occur to him now or at any time because, being lost in any country and among any people, he had nothing, familiarity least of all, to contrast alienness with.

He had left his water-proof too, and now he walked in his slate-grey, nattily fitted suit up the land; climbing unevenly in the misty light that was the sun's final and hopeless attempt to make something else out of the condemned summer day. From a little distance you could not make out the rose-colored pinstripe in the suit's stuff or the fancy Broadway shoes, but only the dilatory jerk of the thin boyish figure's advance, the young head turning sharply, defensively, the hesitation, the faltering that might have been city-bred uninterest for where he was or might have been bodily fatigue. The words he said he spoke in silence: he said, if I went as far as the edge and went right on walking without stopping that'd be O.K. too. That wouldn't make anybody sit up and stutter. When Father O'Malley saw it in the paper he'd say mass for my soul and no

questions asked. He lit a cigarette on his lip and blew the smoke out and let the dead match drop the miles to land below.

Then he saw that the island was over-run with life, the continent of resurrection swarming with established, articulate existence. The narrow sandy-looking beach far down against the sea was shivering, quivering with it; the crags and the cathedrals of its rocks, the soaring imitation pipe-organs of its stone marked with the sign of the possession of birds : these great white crying fowl that clustered, perched in hundreds on the hewn monuments, or flew across the water in twos and threes as innocent as pigeons, and the mingling welter of their voices, the pronged, metallic-tongued conflict of creeds, policies, vices, rising actual as wire strings and shreds of tinsel to him.

There were a few crows below as well, perhaps only a half a dozen of them, and they did not come to light on the island but flew out, lazily flapping across the sea, and then separately and schemingly made the arcs of return and approached the island's savagely guarded towers. In a minute he saw the game of Cops and Robbers they were playing: the gulls wearing the spotless uniform of law massed in virtue and security, and the crows, sinister, evil, armed with cutlass-bills, the unmistakable iconic robbers of a Silly Symphony. One would come singly towards the crags and hang, hesitate as a fly approaching icing, just above the sunken skyscrapers of rock, and crying shrilly the gulls would curve out from their ledges or rise up from the beach,

and with their countless high sirens shrieking dip towards the one jet black, ramshackle, and guffawing bird. He would beat his languid way up higher, flapping in retarded motion to the mainland, and as if this were the signal given the next crow would take the wind and rise to attack the stronghold of the home and young. Then the defenders left off the chase and wheeled, screaming, to defend from the next second-story worker the sanctity of what was theirs in movement so remote, so far, like a ballet danced exactly on a distant stage, their cries a passage played correctly by the strings but as if under the weight and muting of ton on ton of water or glass. He might have been looking into an aquarium below, he thought, where a swell time was being had by loony under-water crows.

Maybe I like nature, he said in some kind of wonder at himself; maybe that's what I ought to go in for, start a farm, or get a fishing-smack and live like that. Maybe I could buy a camera and take pictures for the rotogravures or *Life*, or a movie-camera and take birds or animals or something like that and make a living at it. But now because the memory of his own life and the question in it had returned, striking hard as a physical blow against his heart, he turned and lit a cigarette and then started down the hill. He could see the teahouse roof, thatched like a cottage roof, and the stone benches they'd set out on the grass, and he walked down fast from the cliffs and toward these signs of man and habitation. They keep things nice and neat here, you can say that much for them, he said. Even in this

kind of half-wilderness they keep it up. They keep things nice with those little stone toadstools to sit down on, and those stone cats chasing the stone birds across the roof. Everything nice and tidy, and the grass so neat you don't like to walk across it, he said and he kept to the little gravel path. He went nervously, quickly, into the teahouse's one big room and stared blankly a moment at the indoor-darkness while he took his hat off. He had hung it up on the peg where his water-proof was before he saw the girl sitting near the window at the other end.

Everything seemed made out of stone here: the walls up to the frail stained-wood panelling, the floor, the rustic fireplace in which the copper warming-pan and kettle hung. But it wasn't real stone, he saw after he had given his order to the woman and sat looking uneasily at the floor, the walls, the door, the menu, at anything so as to keep himself from looking too often at the other table and the young girl's face. The stone was a kind of composition stuff, something like blotting-paper compressed to this, and the flame on the cement logs in the fireplace had nothing to do with fire: it was strips of red cellophane attached to the imitation wood and blown to flickering flame-like movement by an electric fan they had not even taken the trouble to conceal. It was as good as sitting on a stage, he thought, and a girl's face just as good to look at as any star's.

She was wearing a dark green sweater with the collar buttoned high, and a green velvet-looking beret on one side of her short straight light hair. She was



small and thin, her chin uncertain, and her ears tiny and waxen with the hair pushed back behind them as if they were anything, clips or side-combs or barrettes, except the organs for hearing they were intended to be. She had the slightly-worn young look of a girl just out of school on an afternoon in spring: a girl who didn't get to bed early enough at night, stepping it hot, stepping it wild, and maybe nobody to tell her that it showed. She might have just stuck her high-school books out of sight below the table, thinking that strangers wouldn't notice the ink on her fingers and the dirt in her nails and, not seeing, take her for Greta Garbo or the Queen of England or something just as good as. She was eating a cress and egg sandwich with a refinement Big Fiddle respected, holding her little finger curved; her profile, the thin little nose snubbed, the nostril wide, the lashes long, concentrated on the view of boggy water that spread through the grasses to the sea. Now and again she looked back at her plate or cup, and then out on the pastures and the hillside again with a detachment so elegant, so ladylike that it might at any moment perish.

He would never have spoken to her, never said a word, although he watched her continuously and furtively. A girl, he thought, and he washed the prawn salad down with tea --- three shrimps taken out of a tin some time last week and resurrected on big wilted salad leaves with sweetened mayonnaise --- like any bitch back home, to come into your arms in bed at night or on a park bench somewhere, to rub against

you on a dance floor, to meet you on the street-corner Wednesday and Saturday nights, to sit knee to knee with you in the movies in the dark. Father O'Malley, Mrs. Carrigan, the thing cried gravely out within him, you don't know what you did to me. You've got to understand.

She had got up now and just as she was leaving the table she half-turned her face and half-turned the thin school-girl body towards him, and quickly, sweetly smiled. He could see the short narrow skirt drawn flat across her hips now that she stood, a faded navy blue, and the yellowish silk stockings, soiled at the ankle-bones, too big for her and hanging on the thin legs that terminated in the high-heeled mud-caked dancing slippers that were decorated for the country and for rain with frayed soiled satin bows. He watched her leave the money, not looking at him any more, and watched her walk, fastidious, refined in her cheap clothes, down the aisle: picking her way like a dress model among the empty tables while her pelvis in the shabby skirt swung delicately from side to side.

When she was almost at his table, he got up fumbling his napkin in his hand, and the packet of cigarettes dropped on the floor and he jerked down before her to pick it up from the composition stone.

"Oh, I say, did I do that?" she said. She faltered before him on her heels, looking straight into his face a moment in ladylike surprise. She was carrying the big leather handbag high up under one armpit now and she had put brown leather gauntlet-like gloves on

with the finger-tips of them worn whitish, and with her free hand she settled the beret a little better on the side of her head.

"I did it. It was my fault," Big Fiddle said, speaking fast. He felt the heat pour up into his face. "I thought maybe ... I was wondering if you'd take a cup tea with me," he said. He looked miserably away from the stare of her big, dim, violet-colored eyes.

"Well, that would reely be very nice," she said. She smoothed the seat of her skirt out under her with one hand before sitting down in the chair he had not quite managed to pull out. Then she put her big leather bag down on the table and took one gauntlet off and touched her hair. "Quite a nice little place to have a bite in, isn't it?" she said with great refinement as she smiled. Leaning to pick up his fallen napkin now, Big Fiddle saw her yellowish silk legs under the table, not far from his, and the blood ran hard into his head.

"It's the first time I came here," he said. He held the package of cigarettes across the table towards her, taking this as excuse to escape the sight of her eyes and flesh, and looked around to tell the woman to bring fresh tea. "It's not such a bad little joint at that," he said. He watched her thin narrow childish hand take a cigarette out and her eyes lift to his and drop as he held the lighter for her.

"You're not English, are you?" she said, looking with delicacy at the yellow and red tablecloth.

"Not this year," Big Fiddle said, trying to make it funny. He looked quickly over his shoulder again for

the woman in her apron. "Are you?" he said, looking back.

"Yes," she said, and she laughed brightly, self-consciously at him. "But of course I've travelled around quite a bit and I always say that broadens the outlook like. I never thought a change did anybody any harm, don't you agree?" She was smoking with great care and elegance, carefully flicking the little end of ash off with one unvarnished, slightly-soiled, small nail.

"You said it there,," Big Fiddle said with a nervous laugh. He saw that her eyebrows had been immaculately plucked, and each one drawn with vaseline to a single brown line.

"I knew a gentleman from Canada once," she was saying to him, "and once in Exeter I met some New Zealanders, you know, I was introduced to them at the pictures by some mutual friends --- they were a couple of reely awfully nice New Zealand boys. They had a car, a big new Morris 8, and we went out riding a lot together."

Suddenly he gave up looking for the woman over his shoulder, and without any warning, without himself knowing how he was going to say it but only knowing that it must be put into words, he said:

"Say, let's get out of here. Let's go out and take a walk together. I was looking at the ocean up there from the cliffs before lunch, and it's quite a sight. If you haven't anything else to do this afternoon, maybe we might take a little stroll or something ..."

"I always think it's so interesting to meet people

from other places," she said as a lady might have said it. He saw she used no powder and that the faint coral color on her thin cheekbones was her own: only the eyebrows viciously shaped and the lingering movement of her hand fondling her beret and hair saying maybe, promising maybe You certainly won't be wasting your time.

"The way we've reconstructed the case," said the Superintendent later, "is like this: he made the girl's acquaintance in the teahouse near Brixton Beach and about an hour later they took the bus for Plymouth together. He bought the two tickets all the way through to Plymouth but when they got to Princeton crossroads he got up and asked the driver to let them out, and the driver says your man was carrying a suitcase and wear-a light tan waterproof. It seems he left his suitcase in charge of the waitress in a tearoom at Princeton. It was about five o'clock in the afternoon. He bought some cakes there and a bottle of orangeade and he and the girl went off to have their tea out on the moors together. The waitress heard that said when the girl was picking out the kind of cake she wanted. Then about ten o'clock that same night he comes back to the tearoom alone, acting very jumpy. He asks for his suitcase and goes off without a word, without eating anything either. Now you can take it up and go on with it from there."

## IV

The moor could be seen now for miles about them: wisps of fog lying on the wind-stunted trees, and the

gorse and the stubbed stopped vegetation concealing nothing in all that distance from the eye. The distant grey road tossed up and down through bushes and hummocks, and near it lay the isolate farms, and near it the wild, small, long-maned ponies grazed. The spread of country might have been taken for endless here except for the heart's knowing this was England; this vastness was merely a pause, this turbulent unhappy place only something forgotten for a minute in the empire's consciousness. Even the prison, grey, awful, still, with its walls stringing like a pulp-fish's tentacles weaving toward and fingering death, was not evidence of order and authority. It needed the blood's speech, the sudden silently-given testimony within to say: this is not a land stretching away to mountains, this is a bewilderedness that begins and ends in stone, native to the coastline, but constructed in barricades as you go inland; the menace to flesh being prison, the vision's menace island.

He had begun to feel it when they left Princeton and the sight of the penitentiary behind them and started out across the moors together, but he had no words for it. Instead he went on hilariously, almost riotously beside her, because she had taken the beret off and the misty light and air lay on her hair, and because whenever she stumbled she clutched at his arm with her gauntleted hand, laughing in sweet piercing shrieks, not coarsely but like a lady who has drunk one cocktail might laugh high and musically at something funny said.



"Those heels weren't made for walking anywheres at all," Big Fiddle said, grinning when she seized him. She gave a cry of laughter and toppled, holding fast to his arm.

"You mind those cakes you're carrying! Don't waste your time looking out for me!" she said. "They're perishable, they're full of chocolate custard and I'm not!"

She stopped, convulsed with laughter, bent over double like a child with gripes, the child's forlorn thin hand holding helpless and desperate to his sleeve. Because of all the things that stirred in him, that pressed in quick wild confusion to his mind, he could only stand and laugh terribly too, and when she got her breath and the retching spasms of laughter passed, walk on with her again, the grin fixed almost painfully in his face. Part tender, part aroused, he walked thinking of what she had told him riding in the bus and of what she had not said: the side of the hair, the white empty cheek, the mouth in profile, the wide violet eye looking away from him and through the window's glass as they rode. He had even lain his arm along the back of the seat and leaned a little, as if from the bus's swing, against her: listening to the frail complaining voice describe the house they'd had, the kind of clothes she'd always been used to, the father's money that he'd lost. (He was an army man, she said, and then of course after that he'd had to go in trade.) Telling him how many horses they'd kept, and the gardeners, and her brother going to public school, and now everything was different.

"Sure," he said, leaning closer to her in the bus, his big hand gripping the metal end of the seat, "sure." Maybe she works in a drugstore or in a hairdressing salon, he thought; and maybe her father's the town plumber or the gardener on Lord Somebody's big place, and the high delicate voice went on with the frail cockney-like flat twang like music playing in it:

"Of course, it's awfully hard on mother now, but I say we all have to take life as it comes and worry only brings grey hairs. I say we got enough to worry about in the day without worrying about next week ---"

"Sure," said Big Fiddle, tightening his arm along the back of the seat. The fragile, the peaked, the almost ailing, almost tainted quality of her flesh lured him speechlessly and terribly toward love. "Sure. Live in the day's my motto," he said. He could scarcely bear to feel the helpless curve of the thin spine drooping as if in illness underneath his arm. Then she turned her head and looked into his face, smiling, the teeth so white that he thought only of their beauty and not that they could be false.

"That's right," she said, and for the instant she looked up at him, sitting close, the pain of taking her, thin, under-fed, impure and nursing her, feeding her, laying her clean in bed in clean sheets at night stabbed wildly and agonizingly into his heart. Whatever or whoever she is, she's my girl now, his blood said, hotly, powerfully. She's my girl taking a bus-ride with me, my girl going to have dinner in Plymouth with me and then take in a show. And then what, what after that?

She had turned back to the window again and when she moved he could smell the cheap stale perfume that she had put on her clothes. She was looking out through the glass again at the heather-covered and bush-grown country that fled past, the childish neck turned, the small breakable white jaw-bone visible beneath the skin. And maybe she won't want that to be the end of it either, maybe she won't mind for once getting home later than she thought.

"Is there any special time, do they expect you home at any special ---" he started saying out loud to her, and then the sight of the prison struck him like a blow. He had to stop here, he had to get down in this place where the prison was, he had to walk up to it, get its size, its stink. Maybe this was why he had come to this part of England anyway, whether the doctor said to or not; or why he had taken the bus for Plymouth whether she'd come with him or stayed where she was. There it was, built like a refuge or else like a curse put on the moors, and he could not spare himself: he had to see it closer, the walls, the gates, the electrically-charged barb-wiring, he had to know.

It lay behind them now, a long way back, as they walked together out over the rocky scrub-rooted land. He had seen the cautious apertures for light that scarcely sliced the building's walls, the shape and shadow of the menace, iron-quiet and cold, that stood, neither shabby or well-kept, dirty or clean, but facelessly, drably, enormously stood in centuried silence. Out of some fore-knowledge or fore-sight, he saw as well the faces

that were not visible within: saw them in recollection or fear, not the gaunt sensitive wax-like effigies of imprisoned men which the artist's or imagination's paucity depicts with wasted flesh and dark wild outraged orbs; but those exact likenesses he himself had known: the white flabby unshaven cheeks and chins, the hands insistent as a hoof or horn, the small relentlessly bright and vicious eyes, the leer, the lech, the implacable mutiny and the malicious hate.

"There was a guy called Capone," Big Fiddle said. He was walking away from the sight of it fast, carrying the paper-bag of cakes and the pop bottle, letting her seize his arm and cling and scream with laughter as they went on through the bushes and the coarse red grass. "A gangster back in Chicago they put away in the big house ---" trying to shake the threat aside, to slough the menace like a snake's done skin. But even knowing it was there, the penitentiary and its climate on the edge of town behind, he could not stop the grin from coming: because my girl is here to clutch me, squealing, when her heels turn and to say in her refined lady-like way:

"Of course, I've seen something in the papers about Mr. Al Capone. Of course, I've read how a great number of gentlemen, reel gentlemen took up being gangsters like it was a sport over there in the States ---"

"Sure," said Big Fiddle, grinning. "And this Capone, it seems he went nuts there in jail. That's what happens to you sometimes. You can't stand the strain. There're some fellas can't take it and their

minds crack up or else their nervous systems. This guy Capone, he started making his bed and then undoing it and then making it all over again, right there in his cell."

She gave a little shriek of laughter, either at this or else because her ankle turned again, and she said:

"I'm sure there's nobody likes a good walk more than I do. That Canadian gentleman I was speaking of, he said he never saw any girl who liked a walk in the country the way I do ---"

"I bet I'm walking the feet off you," Big Fiddle said. He stopped, holding the bag of cakes and the pop bottle, and looked down uncertainly at the skin drawn thin across her forehead's dome, and the blue veins in it, and the white parting running through her smoothed-down light hair. The grin was gone now from his mouth because she had brought in someone else, another man who had the right to walk and talk with her and say her name. "Maybe you'd like to sit down and eat the cakes here?" he said with boyish, nervous formality, and she turned and looked fastidiously at the bushes and the ground before she drew the palm of her hand across the seat of her tight skirt and sat.

"Fancy finding such a nice little spot right here on the rock," she said. She crossed her legs in the yellow silk stockings over and pulled her short skirt down below her knees. "Like it was made for us," she said, and hearing that one word bind them to each other, his heart healed and swelled with tenderness. He watched her sit and then he threw himself awkwardly

down on the strange rough grasses below her and undid the bag's pink string.

"About those ginks locked up back there," he said. He couldn't look at her, thinking: you ought to understand, you ought to know. Don't see them like they tell you they are, long-haired artistic-looking guys biting their nails behind the naughty bars and wanting a chocolate ice-cream soda bad; but see them the way I've seen them, the way I've been, sick like animals are sick, wanting nothing except to be left alone or else grunting for food and drink and love the way hogs grunt, dragging themselves sick, snarling, grunting, from filth to filth. "That bunch of them we saw back there shovelling the coal in off the street," he said. He took his penknife with the circular blade out and removed the stopper from the imitation-frosted bottle of orange-pop. "Take what they looked like ---"

"I'm just admiring that knife of yours," she said, daintily taking the bottle as he handed it to her, her little finger crooked. "It looks as if you could do anything with it you took a fancy to."

He lay in his waterproof, leaning on one elbow as she drank, weighing the closed knife in one hand and looking straight out from under his hat's brim at the warm misty everlasting moors.

"I was thinking of slipping it to those guys back there when we passed them. Those kids shovelling coal," he said.

She wiped the mouth of the pop-bottle off with her bright green rumpled handkerchief before she handed it down to him.



"Ta. It's reely delicious," she said. "I don't know when I've tasted one so nicely flavored. Sometimes you get them so sweet you can't reely get them down."

Big Fiddle drank jerkily out of the bottle, his head thrown back, the black hair showing underneath his hat. Then he put the half-emptied bottle aside, upright against a clump of grasses, and passed her the bag of cakes.

"I'd like to give those guys back there a chance to make a break," he said.

"I must say, you do think up the queerest things to say I ever heard!" she said with a laugh. She selected a piece of plum-cake with the tips of her fingers and broke it neatly, the two little fingers held out prettily curved.

"Listen here," Big Fiddle said, looking straight out across the strange misty endless moors. "Sometimes the authorities, you know, the police, the court, the law --- sometimes they make mistakes." Within him his fear and uneasiness said loud and sure: She's my girl, she came on a bus-ride with me, she's going on to Plymouth with me, she's going to have dinner and go to a show with me, maybe it's going to be something even better than that. If I can say it to anybody, I can say it to her because she's my kid, she's my baby. "I mean, sometimes they put guys in the pen who hadn't ought to be there. Once when I was playing in an orchestra in Chattanooga I came in contact with a fella'd been ---"

He saw almost without sight the bag of cakes she

held out to him, and he fished blindly in and took one out.

"Nothing's ever just the way it meets the eye," he said, and she said quickly:

"You might say 'ta' when someone's nice enough to give you something."

In sudden bewilderment he turned and watched the feet in the ankle-smudged silk stockings uncross and cross again, and the frayed satin bows flounce on the worn-out dancing shoes.

"I'm sorry. I meant to say thank you. I just wasn't thinking," he said. He held the cream cake he didn't want in his fingers, not daring to look up into her face. "I bet you think I'm a hick," he said. "I bet you think you're out with somebody from the sticks. I know what you people over here think about a foreigner from home. Only maybe I got some surprises for you ---"

Without knowing she had moved or that because of it he had ceased speaking, he knew she was sitting on the grass beside him and her hand, free of the gauntlet, had entered his, the delicate fingers twining tough and young and wanton as ivy in his fingers. He had not known anything, felt anything of ecstasy before his mouth had covered her half-open mouth.

( *To be continued in our next issue, and concluded in the one after.* )

## THE NEW NATURE

THE ABSOLUTE COLLECTIVE by Erich Gutkind  
(C. W. Daniels Company Ltd., London. 6 shillings.)

This is the sort of book that will be meaningless to most people for no other reason than that it's so full of meaning, and meaning is something most people today know nothing of. They know facts. They know the outer covering, the skin or shell of things, nothing of what lies behind. People are crunching facts everywhere today, in the newspapers, over the radio, in books, conversation, the theatre, the movies: they live on peanut-shell. But there are no facts in this book: it's the clean solid kernel itself, a hundred pages or so of rich and compact meaning. The man who reads as he runs is sure to pass it by. It's a book definitely not for the noisy fact-mongers, the fact-crunchers, but for the few spiritual ones, the "still" ones, as Keyserling calls them, who know how to sink their teeth into the reality behind the fact.

Meaning is something essentially organic and living, and words for the author are not merely labels for things, in a logical sequence of ideas and concepts, but so many necessary steps or *gestures* in the consummation of an act. He does not just think with his mind, he moves in and through thought with the full weight and impact of his entire person. He effects and resolves, moves to completion and fulfilment, rather than to conclusion and end. He consummates rather than proves. The meaning is not spread linearly on the printed page, but lies deep in the frame and texture of the articulation; it is the articulation itself. What we have then is not so

much a body of thought in a fixed and closed system of reference as the thought of a body in movement, in impact at all points, with life. The meaning is as real and vital, "open", to use the author's characteristic phrase, as life itself. The reader at all times must be actively participating with him in the act, follow him *actively*, otherwise the words fold in on themselves and the whole thing becomes quite meaningless.

Erich Gutkind, the author, is a Jewish exile from Germany, whom the tragic events of these last years have not bowed, but rather strengthened and raised to a higher truth and understanding. A Jew of the ancient Essenes type, a man possessed, a holy man, he stands above the storm and stress of surface fact and surface events which unroll from day to day, a solitary and rather tragic figure illumined by a deep inward conviction. "We live," declares Gutkind, "not in the midst of facts, but of profundities." He sees deep and all around, through and beyond fact and appearance, and what he has to say has the stamp and quality of whole vision.

Like every organic expression, Gutkind's meaning moves to a double rhythm, of contraction and expansion. It is the analytic and synthetic rhythm of his thought. He expands and contracts: breaks down and disintegrates, builds up and restores. He is situated at the very heart of the life and death process, that miraculous process which, as he says, "bursts all things asunder only to create them anew." He moves from the analytical to the synthetic aspects of his thought,

and back, in a rhythm as unerring as the rhythm of the blood. At one moment he is all contraction, confinement, *epuishment*, at the next, the most perfect and absolute freedom, expansion, the vital life flow restored, life coursing on again with requickened beat and tempo.

The basis of his analysis derives from the realization, rapidly becoming almost an axiom now, that man's world has collapsed; that man finds himself in a blind alley. "More ruthlessly and inevitably than ever before," writes Gutkind, "the very foundations of humanity are being laid bare in a cataclysm, the results of which, though gradual, are inescapable whether we adapt ourselves to them or fly for protection to some sheltering ideology." The synthesis flows from a fresh conception of man's role in the universe, a role not of plunder and pillage, of grasping, seizing and making himself physical master, but of inward receptiveness and awareness, overflowing, inward and outward unity in which the world (reality) becomes the scene or theatre of man's communion with God. For man, essential man, according to Gutkind, rests in, partakes of and is God; and is realized only as he communes with God, as he "meets" God. God is taken down from his mythical heavens and placed on earth, by the side of man, in an active participation with man in all the things of the world. There is no "beyond", no hereafter. There is only the ever-living, eternal drama of the here and now. God, World and Man are united in indissoluble unity, an indivisible whole, to form The People, *The Absolute Collective*. Thus is restored man's original

state of holiness, *the madriga*, his perfect state of undividedness and oneness.

If this has a theological ring to some people, it must be said with all positiveness, there is nothing theological about it. Gutkind takes absolutely no stock in religion in any accepted sense of the term. This is not another call to religion. It is a passionate affirmation of an integral vision of man on this earth, in vital, living relation with the earth and all the things of the earth. Nor is it something of an immediate and universal dispensation, and for the same reason. Gutkind is only too painfully aware that there can be no fresh start before all the present disruptive forces are thoroughly spent. God is not around the corner; *Monsieur Tout le Monde* has no date with him. Like Nietzsche or Lawrence, Gutkind is a man of the transition, from a dying order to the one in the making, and his essential value lies in giving the clue, pointing the way which those in the present who are prepared to follow, may recognize.

Man's world has been running down steadily by a law of spiritual entropy more swift and devastating than the one in the physical world, and human life has become a ghost-like, disintegrated, empty affair, without meaning or significance. Man has lost his sense of God, his inner freedom which is the source and substance of God. Man, center and coping-stone in the arch of creation, has fallen. He has shrunk, dwindled to a unit, a causal entity in a system of causal relations; become a mere thing in a world of things, a miserable dehumanized commodity of which the Proletarian is

the last term, the ultimate limit. This is the crux of the present crisis --- this loss of man's inner freedom. It has broken him inside, shut him in, sundered him from his fellowmen and the living world. "For to be causally vanquished is to be dead," says Gutkind. Man is a corpse in a world of corpses, a pitiable object waiting for redemption in a world of ruins, ghosts, idols, a *Mamser* world, as the author calls it, and all his activities are so many forms of self-violation and self-deception. He would still believe he is alive because he is able to function mechanically, causally. Movement and activity are mistaken for essential action.

Is man doomed? Can he throw off this stranglehold that death has secured on him? Can he recover his original unbroken state of undividedness and wholeness? Gutkind's answer is unequivocal. Man, he says, stands at the cross-roads, before him are two alternatives, return to his "primal significance" or extinction. There is no longer any question of compromise or adjustment.

Thus, Gutkind, in one stroke, clears away that whole lying cultural superstructure which has stood so long between man and his true vision. He dismisses all our false hopes, optimisms, solutions. There is no more question of adding anything further to man, no question of saving him by some new cultural accretion --- another solution. That way is closed --- and for good. On the contrary, the crisis man has reached is due precisely to the fact that he had taken on, cumbered himself up too much, in the first place; he has become too heavy for his own weight, his essential *human*



weight. One cannot continue to add to the cultural load indefinitely without sooner or later breaking down. Gutkind adds nothing to man; on the contrary, he takes everything away. He strips him of all his cultural conceits, illusions, ideologies, and confronts him with his essential reality: *man*. Man, he keeps on insisting again and again, is the one and only reality, the only "legitimate approach." And by man he means essential man, the eternally *human* man, free of every cultural tie --- religious, national, ideological --- whom cultures and civilizations can defeat, but never utterly destroy. This is the man who can save himself --- *by a fresh act of self-realization*. He can open up from the helpless, miserably reduced thing that he is to the free and potent man that he can be. He can open up and flow out to the God within him. He can reverse the rhythm, the direction, from death to life. And this he can do only as he strikes bottom once more, finds himself within, and stands firm. "Our action must have its root in the mysterious center of our dumb, unconscious being ... Our ascent must take its start in the depths of the body."

There is no other way to overcome death than to leave entirely the level on which we have allowed ourselves through our blindness and ignorance, our conceit and egotism, our lust for power and material possessions, to be defeated. For it is a profound law of life that one can never cope with a problem on the level of the problem; one has to move on to a new level. There is guise and ruse here, but of such an elementary realistic kind, it is naive and guileless. On the present level man is

absolutely helpless, and all his scientific and technical achievements, all his attempts at social and economic reconstruction, all his efforts toward peace and good will on earth are bound to come to nothing. For all of them spring from a climate in which only dead things thrive, they are the flowers of death. We have to get down from the death level to a fresh life one. We have to take our courage into both hands, and leap: leap beyond the present level. Break through the floor of the conscious life and into the depths of the body. There's no use trying to escape from the top, by the ceiling. We'll only land in emptiness and void. We have already been there, and there is no going back. We have been at the "metaphysical zenith" of our being, and we cannot go beyond, beyond we are outside our own proper circle. *But we can descend.* To descend is not to go back. "The spokes of a wheel rise and fall, but the wheel does not alter its direction." To descend is to return to the source of man's renewal.

This is the return which man and man only is capable of. For man, unlike the dumb beast, can speak. Man can commune with his essential nature which transcends race, creed, nation, culture, civilization, which rests in God, is God, the man in man who communes with God; and in this speech, this communion, this higher duologue, there is renewal. This is the return that is *ritual*. "Ritual is the place of renewal, it is the new nature ... In the silent collected and binding activity of ritual we create a new beginning, a fresh start is made, new possibilities arise in us, the process of

exhaustion is arrested." In ritual man is gathered up once more into his essential I which man and the world have sundered and dissipated.

What, finally, has brought about our broken state? What, if not precisely this lack of ritual? Ritual has passed out of our lives. We are weak, helpless things, without strength and courage, shut-in and afraid, because the bond has snapped between our most conscious (awakened) moments and the deep mysterious call of the body. There has been a short-circuit in our life's cycle, Gutkind explains, the downward current has been arrested, and we are now bleeding to death from the open wound. "The missing link that has been thus broken away is --- ritual."

There is communion, the higher duologue, in *cult*, too, at the topmost part of man's nature, just as there is in ritual, in the deepest recesses of the mysterious body. But cult has dried up and withered, as the culture which cult informs and vitalizes, has dried up and withered. The culture has fallen, and with it, the cult. Cult has degenerated to nothing more than tradition, an outward empty form of daily activity. To restore cult, there must first be ritual again. The root of the tree must be revived before the topmost branch can blossom again.

Cult dies, ritual never. For so long as man is on the earth, so long as he walks the earth, so long, that is, as he has his place in the body, the source of ritual is secure. He only has to restore the connection again that has snapped, *to descend*, and he has opened up a

fresh well-spring of life and regeneration. The body is God's deep, inexhaustible storehouse of life.

*The Absolute Collective.* The union of God, Man and the World *by ritual*, to make The People. God is, He is all, He is being, man's essential nature; Man who is called, awakened, made *living* by communion with God; the World the scene or stage of the communion: the "completed" union of these three is The People. "The People is not the nation resting on natural, ethnical or biological foundations; it is not the religious bond of the church, nor the ideological bond of state, political group, or alliance. The People is always assembled around God; it is the absolute gathering together. The People is the supreme assembly in which every creature is gathered into man, and every human being is gathered into the absolute unity around God."

*Michæl Frænkel*

ENCOURAGING REVIEWS FROM INKLAND WHICH  
CHEER US IN OUR HOURS OF DOUBT AND GLOOM.

From THE CRITERION: (Summer issue 1938)

"PHŒNIX is made up of all of the worst of the most bogus kind of Lawrence fan, and may be fittingly described as a bromide view of the Noble Savage. The first number reprints (why?) Pan in America from the last published collection of Lawrence's miscellanea, and promises to reprint (why?) America, Listen To Your Own from the same volume. Possibly Sons and Lovers will be serialized later. Other contributors include a Mr. Cooney who stumbles about in an old pair of Lawrence's shoes, which are evidently much too big for him, and there is also an article by Henry Miller. It is difficult to understand why Mr Miller is sitting on this rubbish-dump.

A. Desmond Hawkins

From TOWNSMAN: (October issue 1938)

'Is this Phoenix a turtle?

'Tisn't a bird.

Ah! it's a turdl ---

Edited by Cooney and smelling of Miller ---

These guys attempt any fence,

Riding a Lawrence."

Ronald Duncan

From LIFE AND LETTERS TODAY: (Summer issue 1938)

THE PHOENIX rises from the ashes of D. H. Lawrence. There is some prose by Lawrence about Pan and some very strange pronouncements by the editor.

This is the first number of THE PHOENIX. I think it is destined to be a rare bird."

Julian Symons

From PURPOSE: (October-December issue 1938)

"THE PHOENIX is a simple-minded bogus-mystic hotchpotch affecting anti-politics and anti-intellectualism, which in spite of a stray bit of Miller and Nin hither and anon, does little credit to the memory of D. H. Lawrence, whose misunderstood genius apparently inspires it. Editorial comments reveal no sense of awareness of the contemporary situation, and no sense of responsibility."

Hugh Gordon Porteus

P. S. Meanwhile all is quiet on the American front.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I read the PHÆNIX from beginning to end, except the music, that I will try when I have a piano.

I congratulate you that against so many odds you did it ---

I like the PHÆNIX already risen and hovering over his nest. I like the different printing big and little, and I like the serious tone of the whole thing ...

I feel Lawrence hasn't begun in this country and in England he never will --- and it makes me miserable when they don't get him. In England it is the chic thing to jeer at him --- but I trust in time.

Very Best Wishes,  
Frieda Lawrence

The black is very handsome, isn't it, and soon the PHÆNIX will have to spread his wings and be off.

I liked Fraenkel, it was one of my beliefs always since the war, that death must be taken back into life again --- Fraenkel knows a lot ---

Lawrence's articles seem to be more powerful in your edition than ever before --- it's because before they only published words, but you believe in the meaning ---

People tell me that Lawrence will be accepted in a 100 years! What a long time to wait!

But you are helping it on and I am grateful.

Frieda Lawrence

I write you this note on the eve of leaving for Greece almost; I wish it could be longer, and express in more detail my admiration for the superhuman efforts you have made on behalf of the PHÆNIX. It only goes to show that when a man has fire in his guts he cannot be pinned down by the world, however it tries. PHÆNIX is surely the most fertile effort in the direction of literature for some time now. I can see that you are the kind of man who does not need conventional good-luck wishes; because one gets back always what one puts out, and with this supreme justice to back you, your tremendous energies cannot help but put you and PHÆNIX where you both belong.



If I am ever any good as a writer, or in a position to be of any service to you and your paper, I hereby assure you that you will not have to ask anything of me twice. It is something that has got to go on; the world needs a PHENIX ...

Lawrence Durrell  
Paris, France

I would like to see the PHENIX read and supported. And of course I will do all in my power to bring that about.

Alfred Stieglitz

Your magazine is damn handsome, and extremely interesting.

V.F. Calverton

It is intensely interesting to see a magazine devoted to opposing mechanized thought and art. Though whether that condition in modern times has come about solely through man's subserviency to his own inventions, or through the Christian religion, or through some deeper and innate weakness in man himself, I wouldn't care to dispute. Krishnamurti claims, I believe, that thought is just as dead and uncreative in the orient as it is here, that is a world-wide condition. Enough for me, that I can feel it in practically everyone I speak to.

As for the colony idea, it may be necessary later on, life and time may bring it about --- but I do know that it is possible to become liberated and live a vital life, right here and now. It all depends on the ability to change oneself inwardly, regardless of one's environment. If one cannot do that here and now, one would be poor material to found a colony with. After all, the thing to do is to uncover the real source of life within the center of our own being wherever outwardly we are, nothing but ourselves having brought us where we are, we ourselves having created our own world.

Then, having uncovered one's own living fire or be bubbling spring of creative life and wisdom, it is simple to see the direction of the stream of life and flow harmoniously with it. By creative life, I do not mean the mere ability to write poems, music, what-not, I mean to learn how to fulfil one's self at the very source and so to act creatively in thought-feeling-action, to live in wholeness. Above all things it is not a new system of thought that is needed, but people who can take thought and rebirth within themselves. Fire catches from fire...

With most sincere and best wishes,

H. Gaylord Collins  
Ojai, California



The other day I took the opportunity to re-read much of the first issue of the PHOENIX, and it is good to know that out of the re-reading, standing firmly and clearly, were essentials that logically establish themselves as fundamentally inseparable from real living.

To me, your magazine fills the need for a constant driving home of fundamentals.

I want to express my admiration of the virility of its writings. I look forward to reading the second issue.

Williams Soles  
Woodstock, N.Y.

To begin with --- I am a partisan to none of those correspondents whom you so eloquently rebuked for their censure of the PHOENIX on the basis of its alleged political-economic-aesthetic leanings. Fortunately for myself, I am neither a Communist nor a Fascist and hence do not approach any publication with a demand that it be against or for either causes or any other political cause. I require truth and sincerity and a knowledge and understanding of life and human nature, and I demand that these be expressed in a lucid well written manner.

I know that today more than ever writers are joining up with some party or clique and are basing their support and criticism of the written word on the basis of party credos and doctrine. Well, let them have it that way, and let them also be submerged and inundated by a quagmire of political catchwords and prejudices. They cannot form intelligent opinions for themselves on this basis, nor can they say anything that is an honest expression of thought, nor can they step into the broad light of day as men and women proud of responding to life according to their own innate capacities. They must remain in the shadowy and doomed realm of partisanship and literary or aesthetic propagandists.

Your IN REPLY is a brave, sincere, and moving statement of your ideals and purposes; and I deeply hope that you will carry on in this same spirit, for America needs men who are clear-eyed and unafraid.

It encourages me to know that there is such a magazine as the PHOENIX. And there must be others like myself who cannot but be for you and charge you to go on, while we stand ready with faith and encouragement and with material support, too, when we have it to give.

Thomas Bledsoe  
Abilene, Texas

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AND HAND-PRINTED AND HAND-BOUND  
AT THE MAVERICK PRESS WOODSTOCK N.Y.